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THE TIMES

No. 65,194

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 18 1995

Double payment mix-up on gas bills

Direct debit orders of million customers are under review



Giordano: facing pay
protest by staff

By GEORGE SIVELL
ASSISTANT BUSINESS EDITOR

BRITISH GAS yesterday admitted double-charging hundreds of customers who have switched to paying bills by direct debit to qualify for discounts. It is blaming the high street banks for having failed to read instructions.

The company is checking more than a million customer records, with help from the banks, to discover the extent of its double charging. British Gas says it will make instant refunds, a written apology, and pay any bank charges incurred as a result of any error discovered.

The Gas Consumers Council reported hundreds of complaints from customers who have recently switched their monthly payments

from standing order to the new DirectPay debit system. More than a million customers were lured in just six weeks by the promise of a 5 per cent discount if they switched to DirectPay, but many are complaining of bank statements showing that British Gas has deducted both their old standing order and the new direct debit payments.

The slip-up is the latest public relations disaster to strike British Gas in recent months, after Cedric Brown, its chief executive, was granted a 75 per cent pay rise to £475,000, and it was subsequently defended by Richard Giordano, the British Gas chairman. This week the Gas Consumers Council report-

ed a 94 per cent increase in complaints about the company in the three months to January.

Customers who have been double-charged believed that the old standing order payment would have been cancelled automatically when they switched to DirectPay. Indeed, the *Welcome to DirectPay* leaflet says that standing orders will be cancelled "automatically on your behalf when we receive the signed form".

British Gas last night complained that banks had failed to take notice of a line at the bottom of the form asking the bank to cancel the standing order. It said that the form had been redesigned to make the

request more prominent. The customer services department at British Gas said that hundreds of customers had telephoned with this problem. One customer said that at the beginning of this month British Gas had taken two direct debit payments and one standing order from his account within four days.

Customers who paid their bills with lump sums in advance to avoid the 8 per cent fuel surcharge have also suffered. They found that after they signed up with DirectPay money was taken from their account for gas already paid for.

British Gas said: "To a certain extent we are victims of our own success in that one million custom-

ers applied to switch to DirectPay. Only a small minority of them have been affected. Part of the problem has been the volume of customer applications."

Trouble also mounted for British Gas yesterday on the industrial front. Workers pledged to fight attempts to cut their pay and announced plans for a national demonstration to protest against Mr Brown's pay rise. Staff plan to organise a protest at the company's annual shareholders' meeting in April.

A national conference of workers who belong to Unison also voted to submit pay claims aimed at keeping pace with inflation and delegates

representing 30,000 British Gas workers said they would resist any compulsory redundancies among the 25,000 jobs being axed by the company.

Delegates agreed a motion which read: "Unison pickets should concentrate on exposing the double standards and injustice of the huge board pay rises and the proposed salary and conditions cut for staff."

Dave Sturaker, the union's national officer for the gas industry, said: "British Gas must be the only company in the world to increase the salary of its executives for turning a profit into a loss last year, demoralising their staff and seeing a doubling in the number of complaints from consumers."

Weekend Money, page 33

QC proposes murder law changes after Clegg review

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

SWEEPING changes to the law on murder in the wake of Private Lee Clegg's conviction for killing a Belfast joyrider were recommended yesterday by a government-appointed QC in his review of anti-terrorist laws.

John Rowe, QC, called for the abolition of the mandatory life sentence for murder. This would have allowed Belfast Crown Court to impose a lesser sentence on Clegg.

Mr Rowe said that a defence of excessive force in self-defence, or in the course of duty, should be introduced, which would reduce murder to manslaughter. But the change should not be confined to cases involving members of the armed forces and police, he added.

A soldier in Northern Ireland faced exacting pressures on patrol. "He is trained, as a soldier, to be ready to fight and to be aggressive; but in Northern Ireland, he has at the same time to have in mind his unusual powers under the EPA [Emergency Provisions Act] and he must use them with discretion."

Mr Rowe said: "There was concern in the courts and the army that when a soldier is found guilty, the conviction is for the very grave offence of murder, with a mandatory life sentence, even though he was acting under the pressure of duty and had no evil motive."

But Mr Rowe, appointed last year to review the Emergency Provisions (Northern Ireland) Act 1991, ruled out creating a special offence solely for soldiers, and said that any overhaul must be to the general criminal law.

"It seems to me that both changes in the law are desirable, to allow a discretion as to sentence in case of murder, and to permit the reduction of murder to manslaughter in the circumstances I have mentioned," his report concludes.

His recommendations for reform increase the pressure on Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, who, in the wake of the public outcry over the Clegg case, was forced to begin a review of the law on murder. Mr Rowe's recommendations back up demands from two senior judges in Northern Ireland.

Sir Brian Hutton, the Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, said at Clegg's first appeal that many fair-minded citizens would share the view that the law would be much fairer if it had been open to the trial judge to have convicted him of the lesser crime of manslaughter.

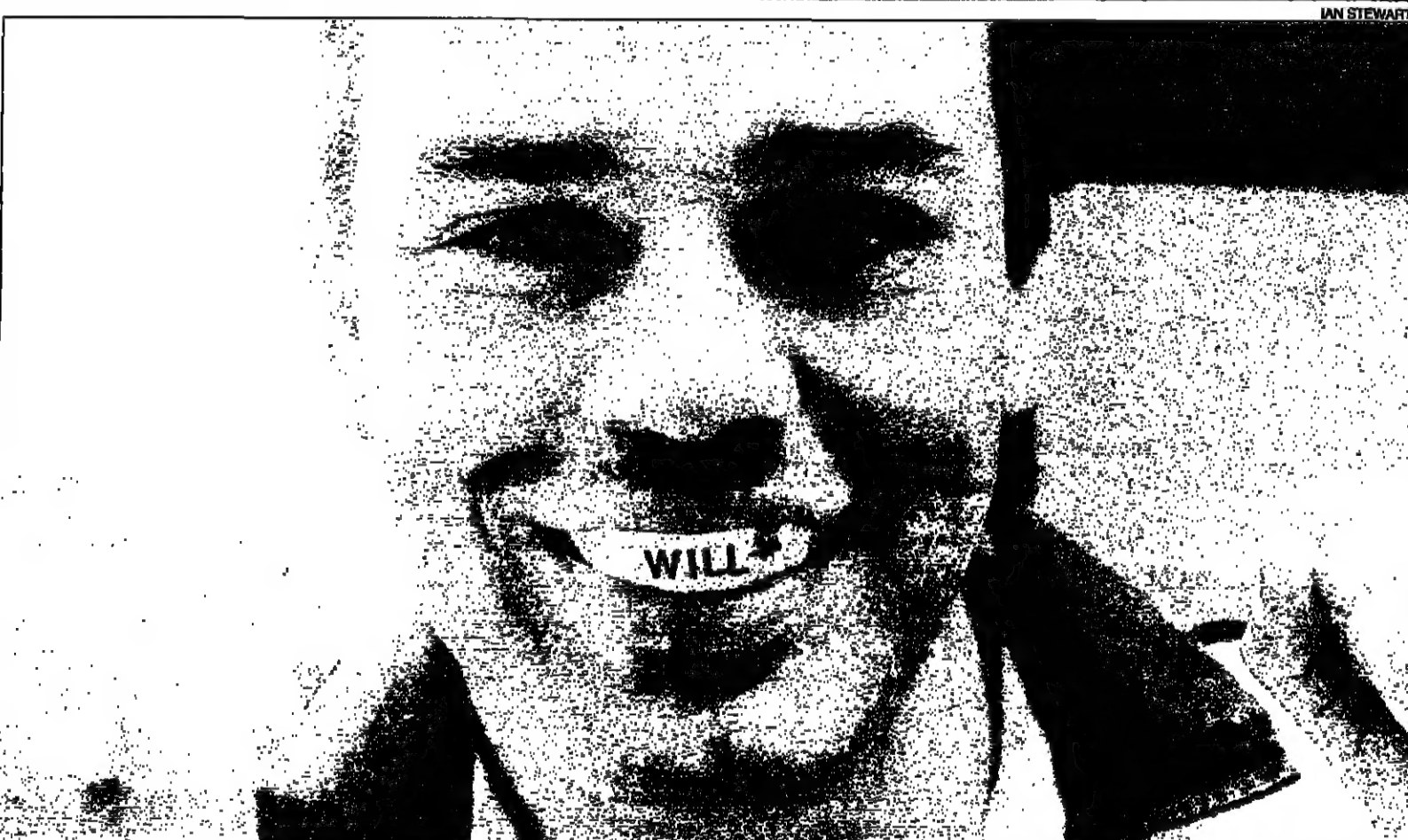
Lord Lane, a former Lord Chief Justice, has urged the Government to scrap the mandatory life sentence for murder, which he said was too rigid to be applied to the whole range of different kinds of murder.

Mr Rowe, a Crown Court Recorder and former leader of the Northern Circuit and Chairman of the Bar Council, was appointed in 1993 to carry out a fundamental review of the Emergency Provisions Act.

His recommendations will fuel the debate triggered by the Clegg case and the sentencing of two Scots Guardsmen for killing a teenager in north Belfast. Clegg, of the Parachute Regiment, is serving a life sentence in Wakefield prison.

In addition to proposing reform of the murder law, Mr Rowe calls for the Government to drop its power to intern people in Northern Ireland. The Government has argued that it needs powers to cover every eventuality in Northern Ireland.

Exclusion orders, page 2



Will to win: The England captain, Will Carling, wearing his protective gumshield complete with a defiant message for the opposition

Gumshield message for Wales

WILL Carling, England's rugby captain, will sport the latest in personalised equipment - a gumshield with red rose insignia - as he aims to protect one of Britain's best known faces in the heat of battle.

This afternoon he leads England for a record 47th time as they play Wales in Cardiff in the five nations' championship, looking to build on wins over Ireland and France.

The gumshield is approved by Bill Treadwell, the England dentist. "It is very important, not only to prevent dental damage but to act as a cushion to prevent concussion," he says. Made of plastic, a gumshield costs about £30.

All the England players now wear gumshields since Jeremy Guscott, the centre, started the trend. Some prefer nicknames to first names, and Mike Teague, the former England forward, had "Iron Man" to intimidate the opposition.

France play Scotland in Paris in today's other match.

Match previews, pages 47, 48

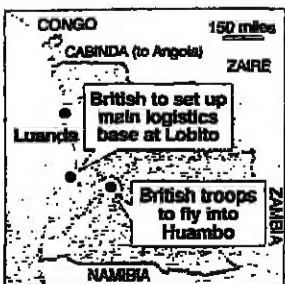
British troops to serve in Angola

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

MORE than 500 British soldiers will leave for Angola next month to help to set up a peacekeeping operation in the southern African country torn apart by civil war for nearly 20 years.

The decision to send a logistics battalion with an infantry guard force to the central port of Lobito as part of a United Nations force is to be announced by the Government next week. The troops will be mainly from the Royal Logistic Corps, Royal Engineers and Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Contingency plans for troops in Angola have been under examination for weeks, since the UN's formal request to Britain to contribute towards the mission, which could last for three months. A reconnaissance party will leave soon to check the logistics base and to decide on final troop numbers. Ministry of Defence sources said that, although a decision had not officially been made, the bat-



Lamont warns of Delaware option

By NICHOLAS WOOD, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN will end up in a similar position to one of the smaller American states unless it abandons the escalator sweeping it towards a federal Europe. Norman Lamont said yesterday as he confronted the Tories with what he saw as the stark reality of closer European integration.

Suggesting that the country was close to the moment of truth in its relations with its continental partners, the former Chancellor renewed his call for the Government to prepare for the possibility of pulling out of the European Union. At next year's inter-governmental conference, Britain should reject a single currency, political integration, and more powers for the European Commission and Parliament, he said. But if it failed to halt the drive towards a federal Europe, it should demand "special arrangements" ensuring looser ties with the Community.

Employing apocalyptic language in a speech at the Oxford

Union, Mr Lamont said the future of Britain as a sovereign state was at stake. "If we go much further, the Government of Britain will have more resemblance to the state of Delaware than to a sovereign independent government," he said.

Subsidiarity - handing back powers to national governments - had failed totally, and the leaders of Europe made no secret of their goal of a federal state. "We have signed up to a Europe which has a parliament, a passport, citizenship, a flag, an anthem, and wants to have a single currency, an army and a foreign policy. Who can doubt that the ambition of Europe's politicians is to create a United States of Europe with a federal government?" Mr Lamont attacked the Cabinet's true over a single currency, accusing the Prime Minister of indecision.

Blair challenge, page 2
Norman Lamont, page 20
Leading article, page 21

Computer chip gang raids Mawhinney's HQ

By JONATHAN PRYNN
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

THIEVES broke into the office of Brian Mawhinney, the Transport Secretary, and ransacked it, prising open computers apparently to steal their memory chips.

Dozens of computers throughout the 18-storey transport headquarters in Marsham Street, central London, were broken into during the raid, which was discovered by security staff yesterday morning.

A scene of devastation greeted Dr

Mawhinney. "A lot of the computers are smashed," one civil servant said.

Officials played down fears that the break-in was the work of anti-motorway demonstrators, but could not rule it out. "We would have expected them to leave a calling card or spray slogans if they had managed to get in," a spokesman said. Motorway protesters who last year scaled scaffolding around the building denied they were involved in yesterday's raid. A spokesman for the M11 protest group said: "This is too sophisticated for us."

Mr Mawhinney ordered an urgent

investigation into how the gang evaded tight security. The building is under 24-hour guard by government security officers and is monitored by closed-circuit television. Police investigators yesterday took away film from security cameras in the building; they are believed to have caught the gang of five in the act of wrecking the computers.

Officials said that the computers had been wrenched open and internal parts removed. "The lids had been very expertly and very adroitly twisted off." There was no sign that the raiders

had made any attempt on locked filing cabinets and drawers containing commercially sensitive information.

Yesterday, staff who work in the offices affected were given the day off.

The break-in is the latest in a wave of computer chip thefts in London and the South-East. Sophisticated personal computers contain chips worth up to £1,000. They can be easily sold on the black market and are often exported to Eastern Europe. In December, the AA lost £150,000 worth of memory chips when its Basingstoke headquarters was raided.

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Tory MPs fear arguments could engulf Government in full-scale crisis

Blair attacks Major over Downing Street split on Europe

BY JILL SHERMAN AND PHILIP WEBSTER

TONY BLAIR last night suggested that the Prime Minister's failure to back his Chancellor on European monetary union could lead to the Government being paralysed.

Mr Blair ditched a speech he had prepared for a meeting in York on Clause Four of Labour's constitution to exploit Cabinet divisions over Europe. "Mr Major's refusal to back his Chancellor on monetary union yesterday was the climax of a defining period for the Conservative Party," said the Labour leader. "It exposed the fault line now running from Number 10 to Number 11 and right through the party. It has momentous consequences for the Government of the country."

The Labour leader's attack came as Norman Lamont, the former Chancellor, accused John Major of taking refuge in indecision over a single European currency. "This is an issue of principle, not of tactics or timing," Mr Lamont said in a speech at the Oxford Union. "We will not resolve this issue by deciding to be undecided."

Many ministers and Tory MPs fear the arguments inside their party on Europe could engulf the Government in a full-scale crisis. But yesterday the Prime Minister and Mr Clarke strongly denied suggestions of a rift. Mr Major brushed aside questions about Mr Clarke's position, saying on a tour of

Cambridgeshire that he would not waste his time on such "trivial nonsense".

The Chancellor, on a tour of Wales, was clearly exasperated by a barrage of questions about alleged Cabinet disunity, telling reporters to "give it a rest" and accusing the media of resorting to "tedious textual analysis" to sustain their onslaught. "We have run out of ways of making clear that there are not any divisions," Mr Clarke said.

The damage limitation exercise had begun on Thursday night amid horror in Numbers 10 and 11 Downing Street at television reports highlighting the Prime Minister's failure to endorse his Chancellor's view that monetary union would not threaten the nation state. After anxious consultations between senior officials, Mr Major secured his Chancellor's backing for a letter in reply to Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, saying that they were agreed that a single currency would raise significant "economic and political and constitutional implications".

Yesterday, Mr Clarke pointed to the letter as evidence that he and the Prime Minister were at one on a single currency. "It is exasperating that people pick up words about a policy on something that, if it happens, is not going to happen before 1999."

But, with most Tory MPs

judging that Mr Clarke had had to give ground in his tussle with No 10, the Chancellor appeared reluctant to signal a full surrender. When asked if he still believed that a single currency did not imperil the nation state, he said: "We have had all that. The Cabinet has agreed, the Prime Minister and I have always agreed. We have the same views on the whole issue."

Mr Clarke's friends indicated that he had decided to soften his stance because his speech last week had been misinterpreted as meaning that he believed that there were no constitutional implications in a single currency. He was said to accept that there are wider considerations to scrapping the pound, but still believed that the economic ones should take precedence.

Mr Clarke's friends predicted that he will now lower his profile in the belief that the arguments have become too polarised. But his supporters believe his resistance has succeeded in checking the Euro-sceptic bandwagon inside the Cabinet and denying the Right a manifesto commitment ruling out a single currency for the life of a parliament.

Sir Leon Brittan, a senior European Commissioner, gave warning in a speech in Cambridge that if Britain stood aside from a single currency, interest rates would be higher.



Norman Lamont in Oxford yesterday before addressing the Oxford Union. He accused John Major of indecision on Europe. Lamont speech, page 1

Mayhew lifts orders banning ten from Ulster

BY RICHARD FORD AND NICHOLAS WATT

TEN people banned from Northern Ireland had their exclusion orders lifted yesterday after the security services advised the Government that they were no longer a threat.

Next month Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, is expected to remove some of the 56 orders that ban people from Northern Ireland and other states from entering Britain. He is likely to make an

announcement during the annual Commons debate on the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The exclusion orders have been resented on both sides of the community in Northern Ireland as a form of "internal exile".

The orders lifted yesterday were the responsibility of Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland Secretary. He told MPs of his decision and of Mr Howard's review in a Commons written reply.

Eight of the ten were also banned from the British mainland. The

Northern Ireland Office refused to name any of them, saying that it was against the department's policy to do so.

However, a Sinn Féin councillor from Co Monaghan is known to be among them. Pat Treanor was banned from Northern Ireland and mainland Britain in July last year after being inadvertently injured in an IRA gun attack as he was being driven away from questioning by the RUC. He had been arrested earlier in the day as he showed two Swedish

journalists around closed roads on the Fermanagh-Monaghan border.

Politicians in the Irish Republic, who have pressed for an easing of Britain's anti-terrorist legislation, welcomed yesterday's announcement. Dick Spring, the deputy Prime Minister, said that it was a "progressive" step and part of the "peace dividend".

But Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionist party, said the lifting of the orders was a concession to the IRA. "If these people in the

south of Ireland were not allowed to come in here because they were suspect, why suddenly can they get in now before the bombs are surrendered, before the guns are given in, the killing machine dismantled?" he said in an interview with BBC Radio 4's *The World at One*.

Last night Gerry Adams, the Sinn Féin president, said that Sir Patrick's step was only a gesture and called for all "repressive legislation" to be repealed. "Much more needs to be done by the British," he said.

Meter rigging was fair, says judge

BY IAN MURRAY, COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENT

A PRIVATISED electricity company was acting legally when it secretly recalibrated a man's meter to run at three times the normal speed to collect money it mistakenly said he owed them, the High Court ruled yesterday.

In a judgment that will set a precedent for all the utility industries, the High Court said that Norweb, the Manchester-based company, should not have been found guilty of unlawful harassment by magistrates last year. Magistrates ordered the company to pay £1,000 in compensation to David Dixon, 58, of Wythenshawe, when he took it to court after he found that it had secretly recalibrated his pre-payment meter.

The bill concerned a property where Mr Dixon had never lived but which had been inhabited by another David

Dixon. It took him three weeks before he was able to convince the company it was making a mistake and that he did not owe £677.86.

In the meantime Mr Dixon, who was unemployed and received £33 a week in support, had to pay £11.08 into the electricity meter a week at his home after electricity men had come supposedly to "check the meter". "I had to choose between feeding the meter and feeding myself," he said. "Often I could not afford to eat."

Manchester magistrates agreed that this amounted to unlawful harassment. Mr Justice Dyson, however, ruled yesterday that the magistrates were wrong because the company did not have a contract with Mr Dixon but only a statutory duty to supply him with electricity.

French call for strike at ferry ports

THE Channel Tunnel and French ferry ports are expected to be blocked from next Thursday by French seamen protesting about a cargo ferry operator that is employing Polish seamen.

According to the seamen's union Meridian Ferries is undercutting its members by employing cheap crew on two freighters between Folkestone and Boulogne. It claims the ships operating between EU ports should employ only French or British union members who would command higher salaries.

The French unions are calling for solidarity strikes at Calais and Dunkirk. Paul Desgris, Meridian's French-based general manager said the company had agreed to the gradual introduction of EU crews once it had become established and won agreement to carry passengers.

M Desgris said: "We are a young company in a competitive market. We will employ French or British sailors as soon as we are able."

Rail chief to head English Heritage

Chris Green, the highly regarded head of ScotRail who resigned yesterday, has been head-hunted to become chief executive of English Heritage at the end of the month. Mr Green, 51, has been one of British Rail's most outspoken critics of privatisation and his departure has thrown into confusion the Government's plans to sell off the passenger rail services in Scotland.

Opposition parties, trade unions and rail-user bodies said Mr Green's decision was a disaster for the Scottish rail network. Brian Wilson, a Labour spokesman on trade, said it was a tragedy that the rail industry had lost one of its greatest talents at such a crucial point in its history.

Nolan to include peers

The scope of Lord Nolan's committee on standards in public life is to be extended to look at the interests of peers. The inquiry will turn to the House of Lords after its first report is published in May. Peers' interests became an issue after Lord Lester of Herne Hill alleged two weeks ago that four peers had taken cash for putting questions to ministers.

Windsor trespass plan

Civil rights activists are planning a mass trespass on the Queen's Windsor estate tomorrow to protest at the continuing closure to the public of a riverside footpath. Jeremy Corbyn, Labour MP for Islington North, said the walk was to show that the Criminal Justice Act was stopping people from moving freely and limiting the right of protest.

Teenage killer gets life

A teenage murderer who stabbed a cab driver through the heart after an adolescence obsessed with violence was jailed for life yesterday at the Old Bailey. Melanie Myers, now 20, of Neasden, northwest London, was attempting a robbery to finance a nightclub outing. Her accomplice Clifton Quarry, 18, was given four years for manslaughter.

Anti-smoking Bills fail

Plans to curb smoking by making health warnings on packets more prominent and by restricting smoking at work were defeated in the Commons yesterday. The Tobacco Products Labelling Bill and the Tobacco Smoking (Public Places) Bill failed to get second readings after too few MPs attended the debate for a vote to take place.

Murder weapon found

Police have found the weapon used in the apparently motiveless killing of Margaret Wilson, a 66-year-old Humberdale farmer's wife, as she walked home along a remote country lane near her home at Burton Fleming. The eight-inch knife, originally intended for use in the shoe-making industry, was found near the murder scene.

Sex season criticised

Channel 4 is to screen a season of explicit programmes on sex, the sex industries and sexual tourism called *The Red Light Zone*. The Viewers' and Listeners' Association said the season was a cynical attempt to boost ratings. Stuart Cosgrove, of Channel 4, said the season included explicit material but denied it was sensationalist.

Sunday theatre shows

A West End theatre group is to open on Sundays from April. Mayfair Theatres and Cinemas, which owns eight theatres, negotiated an agreement with the technicians' union Bectu for a 10 per cent pay rise. The group said tourists were surprised they could not see Sunday shows. Talks on a national agreement collapsed in December.

Teacher on drug watch



Sara Jobling, 36, left, a teacher who spent a week working undercover with drug squad officers in Northumbria, quickly put the experience to use when she caught a boy selling cannabis at the Southmoor School, Sutherland, where she teaches biology. The boy was cautioned by police. Mrs Jobling also acts as a health advisor, giving pupils information on the use and abuse of drugs, including alcohol.

Brewery bull shot

An Aberdeen Angus bull named Pushover, which had been shampooed and blow-dried before publicity photographs for Black Bull bitter, had to be shot after charging its owner and bolting. For an hour the bull — chosen for the breed's docility — lurked uncontrolled around Theakston's brewery in Masham, North Yorkshire.

Police arrested three men early yesterday but said they still needed information about the raid. The men had not been charged last night.

ONE of the Royal Navy's rising stars accepted full blame yesterday for ten minutes of error which left HMS *Brace*, a former ship of the Type 22 frigate class, stranded off Chile for four days.

The ship's former captain, Commander Paul Collins, 32, and two junior officers pleaded guilty at the hearing in Portsmouth. Commander Collins was dismissed from his shore job on the staff of the Flag Officer Surface Flotilla and will be found a post by the Navy. Lieutenant Michael Payne, 25, the pilot, was reprimanded and Lieutenant Sarah Brothwell, 25, the first female officer of the watch, was found not guilty. The guilty plea rejected. The hearing continued.

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French call for strike at ferry ports

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Robbers cut women's hands in bid for safe key

BY RICHARD DUCE

TWO supermarket assistants are waiting to learn if they have lost the use of their hands after robbers repeatedly slashed them in an attempt to pry keys to the safe.

The women and a seriously injured male colleague refused to give whereabouts of the robbers. Budgets store in the town of Reading, the women were on the floor as the robbers slashed at their hands. The married women, 38 and 37, were last detained in the Royal Shire Hospital after surgery to repair their hands. Their colleagues, 28, was discharged after receiving 20 stitches to her hands. None of the victims been named.

Inspector Martin Ellis, Thames Valley Police, said: "There is still a few thousand women may lose some mobility in their hands."

Budgets has offered a £10,000 reward for information leading to a conviction. Tuesday night, twenty police officers are in the hunt for the robbers, who escaped empty-handed.

The store was closed when two white men and black man burst in carrying kitchen knives.

Police arrested three men early yesterday but said they still needed information about the raid. The men had not been charged last night.

Com for fri

BY DOMINIC KENNEDY

ONE of the Royal Navy's rising stars accepted full blame yesterday for ten minutes of error which left HMS *Brace*, a former ship of the Type 22 frigate class, stranded off Chile for four days.

The ship's former captain, Commander Paul Collins, 32, and two junior officers pleaded guilty at the hearing in Portsmouth. Commander Collins was dismissed from his shore job on the staff of the Flag Officer Surface Flotilla and will be found a post by the Navy. Lieutenant Michael Payne, 25, the pilot, was reprimanded and Lieutenant Sarah Brothwell, 25, the first female officer of the watch, was found not guilty. The guilty plea rejected. The hearing continued.

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'I hope that we can put all this behind us and be a happy family, as I have at all times wished'



Ivana Citkovitz will benefit immediately with her sister from trust fund interest

Judge rules granddaughters of marchioness can inherit £15m

By Emma Wilkins

THE High Court yesterday cleared the way for the granddaughters of Maureen, Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, to inherit her family fortune estimated at £15 million.

Evgenia Sands, 30, who is married to the British actor Julian Sands, and her sister Ivana Citkovitz, 28, will benefit immediately from interest on a trust fund established by their great grandfather, the 1st Earl of Iveagh, Lord Iveagh, who founded the Guinness family brewing fortune, died in 1927 leaving an estimated £200 million to be shared by his children, including Ernest Guinness, Lady Dufferin's father.

Lady Dufferin, 88, who lives in Knightsbridge, west London, won the right to leave her granddaughters her remaining interest in the family trust fund after a three-day hearing in the Chancery Division in London.

Lady Dufferin's wishes, which she executed in a deed in 1991, had been challenged by her daughters, Lady Caroline Lowell and Lady Perdita Blackwood, and daughter-in-law, Lindy, Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava. Interest on the fund has accrued over four years while the legal action was pending.

Mr Justice Knox rejected the challenge and ruled that Lady Dufferin was entitled to settle the family trust fund in favour



Lady Dufferin: wishes challenged by daughters

of Mrs Sands, a former Max Factor model who lives in Los Angeles, and Miss Citkovitz, who works for the Miramax film company in New York. Legal costs, which some estimates put at £100,000, will be met out of the trust fund.

After her victory, Lady Dufferin, who has already settled substantial fortunes on her children, said that she remained deeply sad that her daughters and daughter-in-law had caused the family distress by bringing the action.

In 1948 she surrendered the greater part of the fortune that she would inherit from her father in favour of her children. Her son Sheridan, who died in 1988 from an AIDS-related illness, left his widow



Evgenia Sands, a former model living in Los Angeles, with her husband Julian, the British actor

some £15 million. "I am pleased with the ruling of Mr Justice Knox which reflects exactly my wishes in these matters which I arranged 47 and four years ago respectively," Lady Dufferin said. "However, I am saddened that my two daughters and daughter-in-law should have caused the family such distress and

expense in having started this legal action.

"They have said through their lawyers that they will be bound by the ruling, so that brings this unhappy saga to an end. I hope that my children, my daughter-in-law and my grandchildren and I can now put all this behind us and be a happy and united

family as I have at all times wished and made known to them all."

The decision means that Mrs Sands and her sister will inherit capital interests in the trust fund, including the Owl House, an estate in Lamberhurst, Kent, and property in Knightsbridge on Lady Dufferin's death. During her lifetime, they will receive interest from the fund.

Lady Caroline, 63, who was married to Lucian Freud, the artist, Israel Citkovitz, the composer, and latterly Robert Lowell, the American poet, was party to the legal challenge, even though her daughters will benefit.

Lady Perdita, 60, who breeds racehorses in Northern Ireland and Lindy, Lady Dufferin, widow of Sheridan, the 5th marquess who died of an AIDS-related illness seven years ago, have no children.

In 1948 Lady Dufferin surrendered the greater part of the fortune she would inherit from her father, Ernest Guinness, in favour of her children, allowing herself an income of £18,000 a year.

□ In Wednesday's report of the court proceedings, a caption stated incorrectly that Lady Dufferin wished to pass over her daughters and daughter-in-law in favour of her grandchildren. As the story made clear, Lady Dufferin made provisions for her children in 1948 and we apologise for the error.

Robbers cut women's hands in bid for safe keys

By Richard Duce

TWO supermarket assistants are waiting to learn if they have lost the use of their hands after robbers repeatedly cut them in an attempt to obtain keys to the safe.

The women and a less seriously injured male colleague refused to reveal the whereabouts of the keys at a Budgens store on the outskirts of Reading. They were made to lie on the floor as the three raiders slashed at their hands.

The married women, aged 38 and 27, were last night detained in the Royal Berkshire Hospital after surgeons operated to repair severed tendons. Their colleague, aged 28, was discharged after receiving 20 stitches to his hands. None of the victims has been named.

Inspector Martin Elliott of Thames Valley Police said: "It was a horrendous attack. There is still a fear that the two women may lose some form of mobility in their hands."

Budgens has offered a £10,000 reward for information leading to conviction of the robbers in the attack on Tuesday night. Twenty-five police officers are involved in the hunt for the raiders, who escaped empty-handed.

The store was about to close when two white men and a black man burst in, carrying kitchen knives.

Police arrested three men early yesterday but said they still needed information about the raid. The men had not been charged last night.

Hotline puts the police on trail of soccer hooligans

By Andrew Pierce

DETECTIVES are planning a series of raids on the homes of people named on a special telephone hotline as the hooligans who wrecked the football match between England and Ireland.

The hotline, which was set up by the Football Association and the Football Intelligence Unit, was engaged for most of the day yesterday as a team of six officers dealt with a deluge of tip-offs about the identities of the alleged troublemakers.

Two English supporters who were photographed attacking a lone Irish supporter were sentenced to two months in jail yesterday. Photographs of the men punching the Irish supporter appeared in national newspapers for two days running. Stephen Kearns, 23, and Stephen Sloan, 21, both from Birmingham, were released on £100 bail after being given leave to appeal at Dublin District Court. They were arrested by Irish police on Thursday night who recognised them from the photographs. Six other supporters are in custody in Dublin.

An official inquiry into the riot began yesterday led by Thomas Finlay, a former chief justice. Irish police admitted that they had underestimated British warnings about the extent of the extreme right-wing presence on the terraces at Lansdowne Road.

A statement from the Garda Síochána, the Irish police, conceded yesterday that intelligence on known English

hooligans was received from Britain but the Football Association of Ireland insisted that the information had not been relayed to them.

The Irish authorities were further embarrassed when the leader of the Irish police officers' association blamed senior officers for poor strategy, insufficient manning levels, and the presence of trainee police officers in the line of fire. A plea by Jack Charlton, the Ireland manager, for the friendly to be replayed by the summer was rejected by the FA and Uefa, the sport's European governing body.

Newspaper and television pictures have pinpointed those who hurled objects on to the pitch. "We are making a major effort to identify those at the heart of the trouble. Many of them were recognisable from photographs or television stills," David Davies, the Football Association's director of public affairs, said.

The football unit, with six full-time officers, is part of the national Criminal Intelligence Service. "We were aware that disorder was planned within the ground," a police spokesman said. "We were providing the Garda with every assistance with intelligence and travel information."

A spokesman for the Garda said: "We had no idea that these people would travel in what appeared to be quite substantial numbers." They had been expecting "perhaps 40 undesirables".

Commander blamed for frigate's grounding

By Dominic Kennedy

ONE of the Royal Navy's rising stars accepted the blame yesterday for ten minutes of error which left the Duke of York's former ship, HMS Brazen, stranded on rocks off Chile for four days.

The Type 22 frigate was in danger of sinking with all hands after five attempts to refloat her failed. At one point the crew was encouraged to jump on the deck to try to free her. She was eventually pulled off by a Chilean tug, a court martial heard.

The ship's former captain, Commander Paul Collins, 37, and two junior officers pleaded guilty at the hearing in Portsmouth. Commander Collins was dismissed from his shore job on the staff of the Flag Officer Surface Flotilla and will be found a post elsewhere. Lieutenant Matthew Payne, 25, the pilot, was reprimanded and Lieutenant Sarah Brothwell, 25, the first female officer of the watch to be court-martialled, had her guilty plea rejected. The hear-



Commander Paul Collins and Lt Sarah Brothwell, officer of the watch who was found not guilty



ing was told that Commander Collins was regarded as a rising young man in the Royal Navy until his ship hit the rocks in September last year. HMS Brazen was to negotiate the Canales Patagonicos, a treacherous natural channel on Chile's western coast which at places is uncharted or charted incorrectly.

At 11.56pm on the rainy night of September 11, Lt Brothwell took charge of the

ship as officer of the watch, helped by two inexperienced chart assistants, one on university vacation training. After a series of navigational errors, the ship ran aground shortly after midnight, causing £2 million of damage.

Captain Charles Freeman, captain of the frigate squadron which includes Brazen, said: "I would rate Cmdr Collins in the first XI." He said the recovery operation had been brilliant.

If you'd like to know more about our unique whiskey, write to us for a free booklet at the Jack Daniel Distillery, Lynchburg, Tennessee, USA.

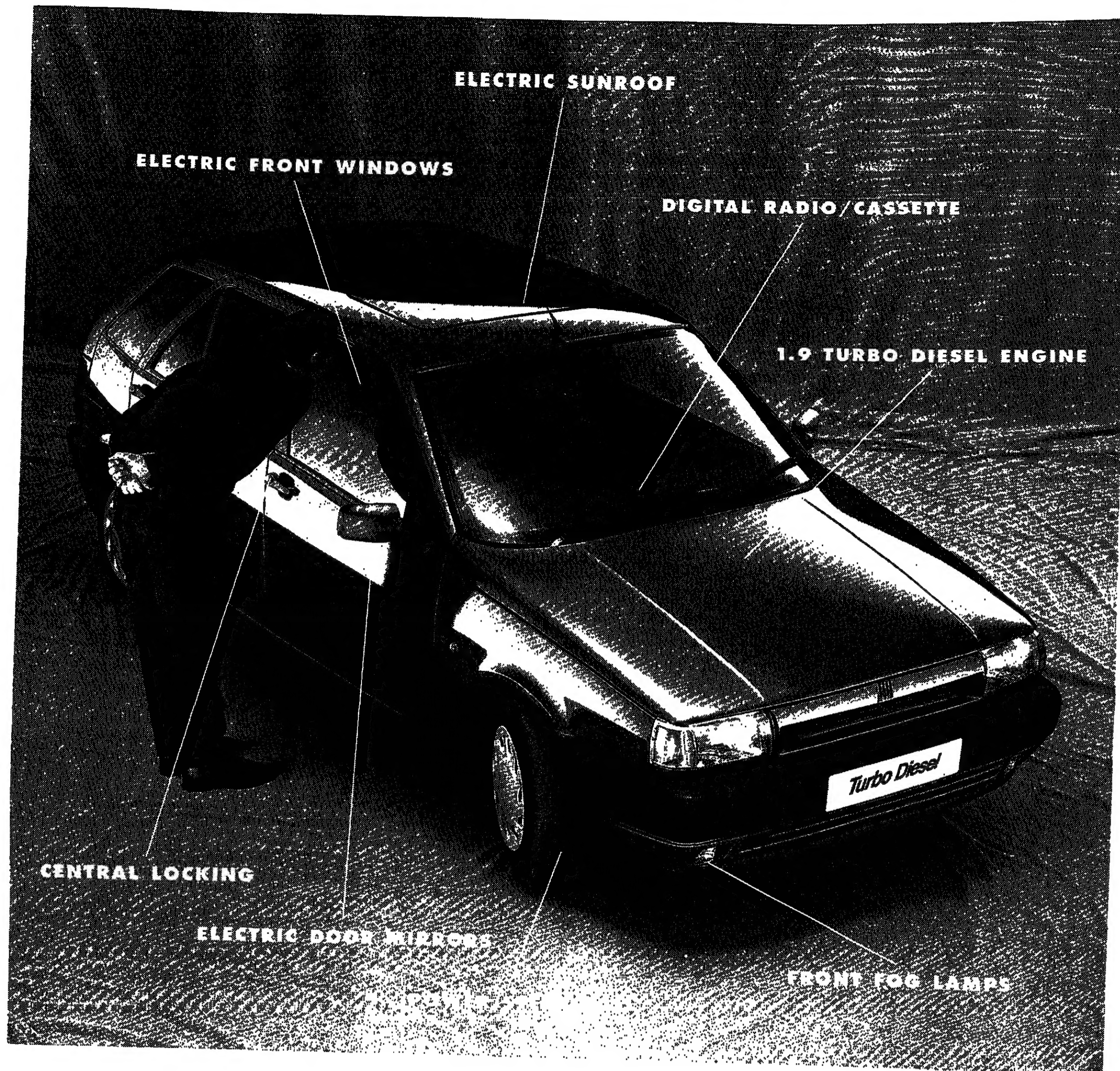
WHAT LITTLE TRAFFIC there is in Lynchburg, Tennessee can be brought to a standstill by a Mallard hen.

This one came from over by our limestone cave spring, where Jack Daniel discovered water so right for whiskey making (it's iron-free), he built his distillery alongside. Of course, that meant sharing the property with a few ducks. But to have a source of water this treasured, we've always been glad to stop for friends who value it as much as we do.



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		FIRST PAYMENT: £159 (INC £60 ADMIN)	FINAL PAYMENT: £6,624.92	INTEREST CHARGED: £1,308.88	TOTAL PAYABLE: £13,202.78

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A hav Sai rep Eu

THE self-governing of Island of Sark prides its being a haven from the of the 20th century: it tax, bureaucracy and the car. For centuries its liament, the Chief Pleas been able to deal with administration in three sessions a year. no full-time civil serv Now it finds itself awash Euro paperwork.

Jennifer Cochrane, a member of the Chief Pleas. "We are being asked to legislation totally inappropriate to our way of life. We been asked to give free sage to lorries on their way Bosnia and grant immunity diplomatic vehicles. We have either diplomats or even tarmac roads."

Of growing concern to dents are the protests England aimed at stopping movement of live animals. Legislation could have a disastrous effect on the carr trade which provides the square-mile island's main form of transport and is important source of revenue and employment.

Miss Cochrane said: "island cannot breed enough horses. We have to import them and of course they very well looked after."

The islanders are also worried that EC regulations co

Gales river.

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY

GALES and exceptional high tides brought flooding towns and villages along the Severn yesterday. In the Midlands hundreds of rail passengers were stranded for over eight hours without food or water after power lines were brought down.

Scores of people were trapped after the Severn burst its banks and a 1.5m surge Severn Bore tidal wave engulfed homes. The bore, the highest in living memory, has been whipped up by gales from the Bristol Channel.

Road commuters had long delays after fallen trees or cables blocked roads in many parts of southern England and Wales.

Services on the InterCity West Coast main line between London Euston and the North West were disrupted all yesterday as engineers struggled to repair overhead cables that had been blown down.

Eight trains, each capable of carrying 500 people, had left London Euston for the North West between 7pm and 11pm on Thursday but were held up



Dealer West

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• 108	• 10
• 110	• 10
• 112	• 10
• 114	• 10
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W N
Pass (2) Pass
Contract: Two Clubs Doubt

By ROBERT SHEEHAN
BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

(1) South on this deal was an expert who should have known better than to overcall on such a poor suit.
(2) East-West were playing Spunk (take-out) doubles of overcalls so West had no option but to pass Two Clubs and hope his partner would reopen the bidding with a double.

Seeing all four hands it looks as though South was about to receive his well-deserved punishment — going for a 500 penalty when his opponents could not make game. West led the jack of hearts which ran to declarer's queen. Declarer's best chance of making some extra tricks seemed to be to ruff some spades in hand, so at trick two he played a spade which West won with the jack. West now made the "expert" switch to the jack of diamonds, which went to East's queen and declarer's ace. Declarer

A haven cut off by the sea from the modern world faces a tidal wave of paperwork

Sark prepares to repel invasion of Euro bureaucrats

THE self-governing Channel Island of Sark prides itself on being a haven from three evils of the 20th century: income tax, bureaucracy and the motor car. For centuries its parliament, the Chief Pleas, has been able to deal efficiently with administration matters in three sessions a year. It has no full-time civil servants. Now it finds itself awash with Euro paperwork.

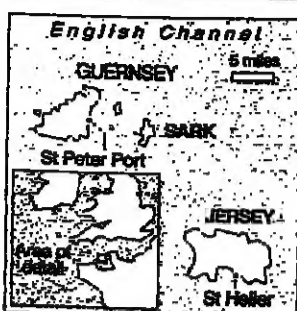
Jennifer Cochrane, a member of the Chief Pleas, said: "We are being asked to pass legislation totally inappropriate to our way of life. We have been asked to give free passage to lorries on their way to Bosnia and grant immunity to diplomatic vehicles. We don't have either diplomats or cars, or even tarmac roads."

Of growing concern to residents are the protests in England aimed at stopping movement of live animals. Legislation could have a disastrous effect on the carriage trade which provides the two-square-mile island's main form of transport and is an important source of revenue and employment.

Miss Cochrane said: "The island cannot breed enough horses. We have to import them and of course they are very well looked after."

The islanders are also worried that EC regulations could

■ The island of Sark has rejected the Maastricht treaty, but Brussels still threatens to intrude. Marcus Binney reports



directives from Brussels which we neither want nor need and certainly cannot afford."

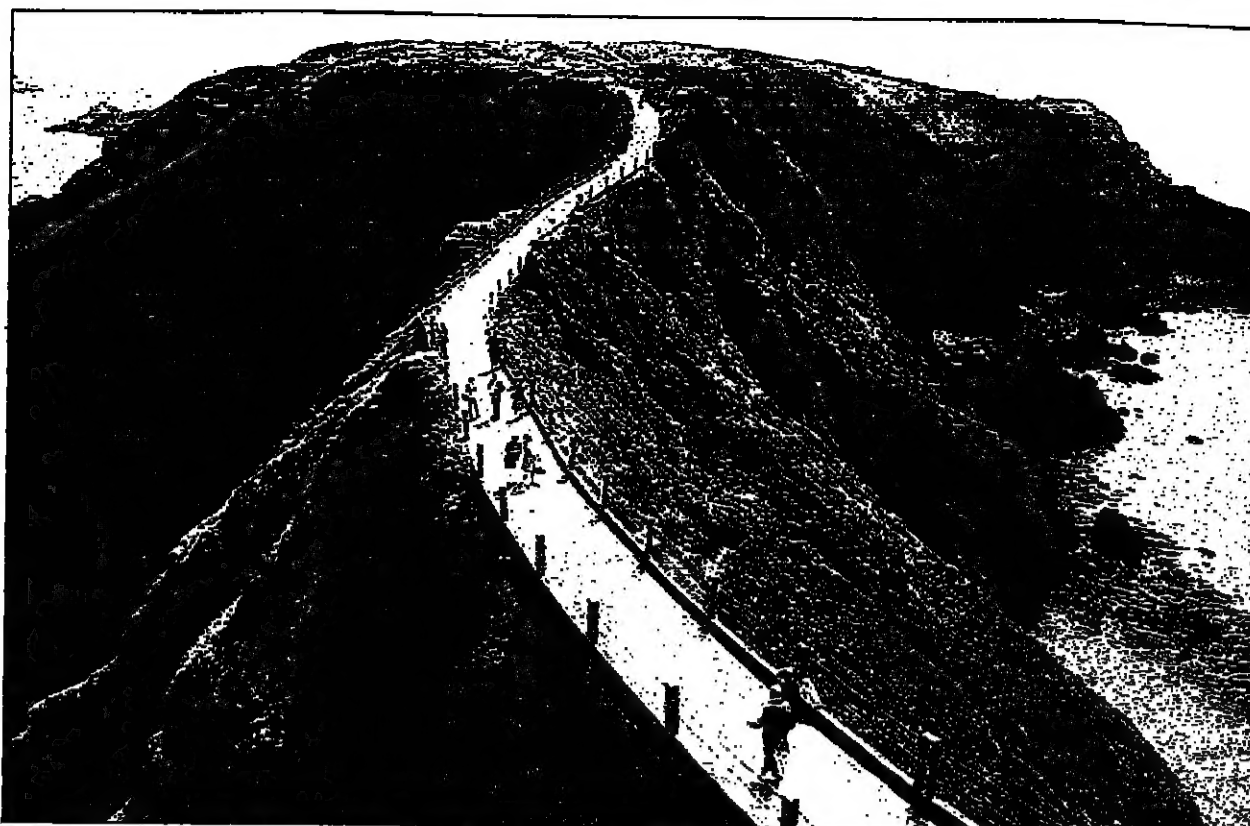
The population in winter is just under 550, although in summer up to 1,000 day visitors can arrive if the weather is good. There is no airstrip, unlike on the other Channel Islands, and in winter the only contact with the outside world is by daily boat.

Sark has three schools, each with one class. The islanders take out their own private health insurance and recently rebelled against the high charges at Guernsey's hospital — £365 a day — and elected to go to Jersey. There is no income tax, but a modest property tax and a "guessed" wealth tax are levied by the island's cabinet, the Douzine.

The current dissatisfaction is a reaction not only against Brussels, but also what is seen as undue interference from Guernsey. Elizabeth Perree, an islander, said: "We declared UDI once before in 1960 when the Dame wanted to hand over the administration

lead to Sark being overrun by immigrants. "Everyone who comes here on holiday says they would like to live here. The island could be overrun with new houses." Miss Cochrane said. At present only long-standing residents are allowed to build new houses and immigrants are restricted to a select number of existing houses which sell at very high prices.

In a letter to *The Times* yesterday, Philip Stokes, Deputy of the People in the Chief Pleas, said: "The island is not eligible for any grants or assistance from the European Union but is being forced to accept ever-increasing



The island of Sark has neither town nor village and boasts no full-time civil servants and a fierce independence

to Guernsey. We determined to keep our own parliament and succeeded."

David Melling, a deputy of the people in the Chief Pleas, said: "Channel Islanders don't have the right to live or work in EC countries, so why should they be able to come here. At present only British passport holders can buy any of the 42 tenements which bring a seat in the island's parliament. But under Brussels regulations people from the Continent could come in and buy up the island."

Michael Beaumont, the island's Seigneur, who enjoys

similar rights to a medieval feudal baron, said: "It's the thin end of the wedge. If we are not careful we will have to let anyone who wants to settle here."

Sark is an island with a history of looking after itself. During the Second World War, the Dame of Sark was renowned for her imperious treatment of the German occupiers. Dame Sybil spoke fluent German, knew about German etiquette and insisted that Germans clicked their heels and saluted her.

The Dame's influence made life on Sark less oppressive

than on the other Channel Islands. The Germans, suspicious of the islanders, forbade them from speaking in their Norman patois, demanding English or German. Dame Sybil would have none of it.

In the 16th century, Rabelais described Sark as an island of crooks, thieves, brigands and assassins. In 1565 a Jerseyman, Heller de Carteret, obtained letters patent from Queen Elizabeth I to settle the island with 42 men capable of bearing arms in defence of the island. The 42 tenements he created to this day bring a seat in the Chief Pleas.



Beaumont: warns of the thin end of the wedge

NEXT WEEK IN THE TIMES

Second Degree, the 28-page guide to postgraduate course vacancies — plus, in Times Sport, up to 30 per cent off tickets to Cheltenham, on Monday

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Designer collections that can be delivered to your door, on Wednesday

Your chance to win a holiday for two in Barbados in our 12-page Penguin books supplement, on Thursday

The Bernard Levin column and the Valerie Grove interview, on Friday

Gales cause havoc on river, roads and rail

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

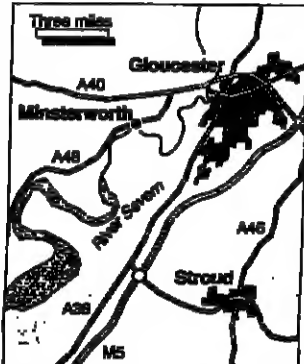
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Services on the InterCity West Coast main line between London Euston and the North West were disrupted all yesterday as engineers struggled to repair overhead cables that had been blown down.

Eight trains, each capable of carrying 500 people, had left London Euston for the North West between 7pm and 11pm on Thursday but were held up



near Rugby after cables snapped on both the main and subsidiary routes. All failed to arrive before dawn.

British Rail said the longest delay was on the 7.15pm Euston to Wolverhampton service, which took eight hours and 20 minutes to reach its destination. A diesel engine was sent to rescue the stricken train but was caught in a logjam of seven other trains.

Passengers, mostly commuters who had to return to London the next day, sat for hours in stationary carriages but were not allowed off the train. BR arranged taxis for those who missed connections.

One traveller on the 7.15, Christopher Griffin, 53, a film producer from Stratford-upon-Avon, said: "We were pretty jovial and full of the Dunkirk spirit at first. But it did wear a bit thin after eight hours. The power was off so we were getting cold and the food soon ran out. People started to get very worked up."

A spokesman for InterCity said: "It must have been a terrible experience. A full refund is being offered." Railtrack has launched a full investigation.

Rabinder Minhas, 31, said his trip was "a journey from hell". He added: "Ten hours for a two-hour journey is ridiculous."

Ian Rose, of Edgbaston, Birmingham, said: "No one made an attempt to get food to us. All the passengers were rationing what they had."

Sam Evans, 20, a journalism student whose journey to Preston took over eight hours, said: "There was very little information about what was happening and we were left to work it out for ourselves."

Forecast, page 24

All-night ordeal on InterCity express

By KEVIN EASON

IT HAD to be a mistake to assume that the daily ordeal of commuting by rail couldn't possibly get any worse.

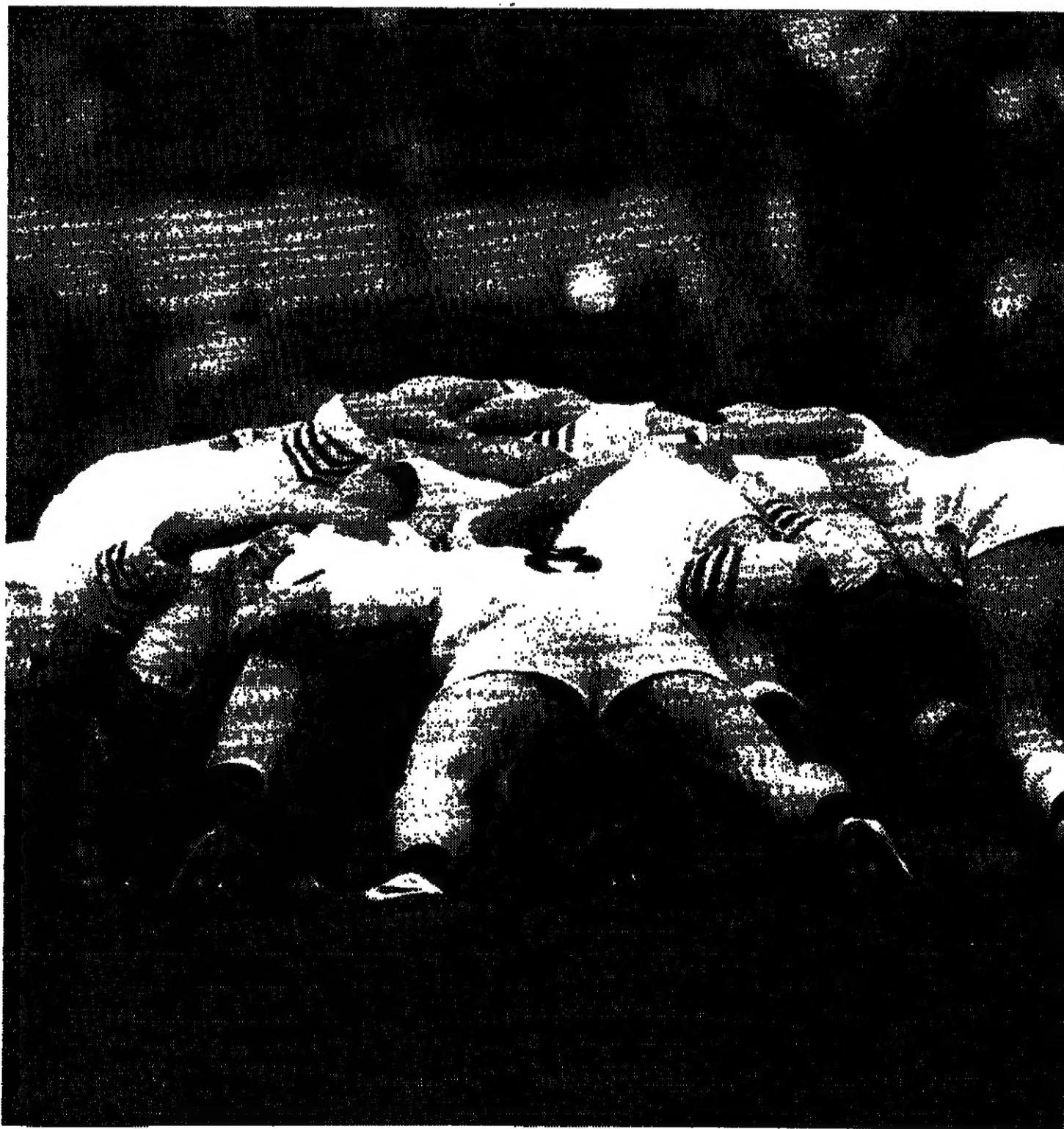
I arrived at Euston at 10pm on Thursday for what should have been a one-hour journey to Rugby. Hardly any services were running and the curiously named information boards offered nothing but: "Train not Ready." The station concourse was awash with lost souls.

But the man at the ticket office didn't recommend a night in a hotel rather than the logjam on the West Coast line. He just took my money. So when the doors opened on the 23.10pm to Wolverhampton I jumped aboard expecting a short haul home on the InterCity express. It didn't leave until 12.10am. By 1am I was staring out at a darkened platform in Buckinghamshire, where we remained for two hours.

It would not have been so bad had there been a buffet car. Sir Ranulph Fiennes has the sense to haul supplies on his expeditions; British Rail could not even offer tea.

By 4am we had reached Milton Keynes, where we were joined by the passengers of a train that had left London two hours before us. At 4.55am we were on our way but by then I couldn't have cared less. I arrived home at 6.30am, in time for a nap before returning to London on the 9.17am.

Knowing what you're looking for is not the same as being able to lay your hands on it.



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SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

Dealer West

North-South game

♠7832
♥10874
♦K885
♣3

♠KQ95
♥K8542
♦Q10
♣K4

♠A10
♥AQ6
♦A974
♣A866

W N E S
Pass (2) Pass 1♥ Dble 2♠ (1)
Contract: Two Clubs Doubled, by East. Opening lead: ♥J

By ROBERT SHEEHAN
BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

(1) South on this deal was an expert who should have known better than to overcall on such a poor suit.

(2) East-West were playing Spuitnik (take-out) doubles of overcalls so West had no option but to pass Two Clubs and hope his partner would reopen the bidding with a double.

Seeing all four hands it looks as though South was about to receive his well-deserved punishment — going for a 500 penalty when his opponents could not make game. West led the jack of hearts which De-ran to declarer's queen. De-ran's best chance of making some extra tricks seemed to be to ruff some spades in hand, so at trick two he played a spade which West won with the jack.

West now made the "expert" switch to the jack of diamonds, which went to East's queen and declarer's ace. Declarer

played a low trump which West won with the seven and continued with another spade. Declarer ruffed in hand, cashed the ace of clubs dropping East's king and now had to guess the diamond position. In the event he played a diamond to the eight. East won his ten and returned a spade. Declarer ruffed, crossed to the king of diamonds and ruffed another spade to bring his trick total to seven and a loss of only 200 points.

Declarer had done quite well but he should really have made his contract. He knew that East had five hearts and four spades and, presumably, two clubs. Had West started with J 10 x of diamonds, East would not have played the queen on West's jack. Declarer should have played a diamond to the king, felling East's ten, ruffed a spade, now a diamond to the eight and a further spade ruff would have brought his trick total to eight.

IN THIS twentieth anniversary week of P.G. Wodehouse's death, England is slowly stirring to the memory of its greatest master craftsman the ludicrous.

A society has been formed. An exhibition is being assembled. One of his rarely seen musical comedies is to be revived. A book on Wodehouse and cricket is in preparation. You could be forgiven for thinking that the ghost of his greatest single mistake, broadcasting to America from Germany during the war, has finally been laid.

But now he is danger moving from a source of innocent enjoyment to an object of serious study. Richard Morris, a Northampton journalist, recently formed the Wodehouse Society, having discovered to his surprise that no such thing existed in this country, despite the fact that America, the Netherlands and Sweden. There is even one in France with only two members, who take it in turn to be president.

Mr Morris, 28, is about to issue the second edition of the mainly named Wodehouse Society Journal. The American society's magazine at least goes for a pun, calling itself Plum Lines after the master's



By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Karpov on verge

With a display of virtuoso endgame technique in a position that had seemed likely to be a draw, FIDE champion Anatoly Karpov has established a virtually unassailable lead against his opponent, the Belorussian grandmaster Boris Gelfand.

The match continues in Sanghi Nagar, India, until one player reaches 5.5 points. However, with the score now 5.5 in his favour, Karpov will now advance to the final where his opponent will be the American Gata Kamsky.

White: Boris Gelfand
Black: Anatoly Karpov
FIDE Candidates.
Game 7, January 1995

Queen's Indian Defence

1	d4	e5
2	d4	e5
3	Nf3	e4
4	e3	e5
5	Nc3	e4
6	0-0	e5
7	Bd3	e4
8	0-0	e5
9	0-0	e5
10	b3	e4
11	Bb2	e5
12	Re1	e4
13	Nc2	e5
14	Ng3	e4
15	Qc2	e5
16	Rf1	e4
17	Qc2	e5
18	Qc2	e4
19	Re1	e5
20	Ne2	e4
21	Re2	e5
22	Ne4	e4
23	Bx2	e5
24	Pot	e4
25	B35	e5
26	Qc1	e4
27	Qd1	e5
28	Na2	e4
29	Qa1	e5
30	Qa4	e4
31	Qa1	e5
32	b3	e4
33	Ba2	e5
34	Qe5	e4

Not shipshape

Twenty six foreign ships were detained in British ports last month by the Marine Safety Agency, including four Bulgarian fish factory ships with cockroach infestations. A Panamanian chemical tanker whose main steering gear had failed was also held.

Firecrews see red

Firecrews answering 999 calls in the West Midlands have been told to stop at red traffic lights before checking if it is clear to cross. Previously they would only slow down. Officials say it will be safer and add "only seconds" to call-out times.

Chairman ban

John Featherstone, 61, chairman of Sunderland Football Club, was banned from driving for 17 months and fined £630 by magistrates at Bedale, North Yorkshire, for driving with excess alcohol. He claimed he had drunk brandy after an accident.

Heart help

Ten per cent of the population of the Orkney isle of Shapinsay, where heart attacks are responsible for 36 per cent of deaths, is now proficient in the life-saving technique of heart resuscitation, thanks to John Brooke, the island's new doctor.

Scots rugby fans touch down in Paris to celebrate the Auld Alliance



Mary: married the Dauphin

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH
SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

WHISKY tumbler will clink with daret glasses today as Scots in Paris for the Franco-Scottish rugby match celebrate the 700th anniversary of the "Auld Alliance".

The rugby match is the first in a series of cultural and sporting events planned this year designed to remind the French of a friendship with the Scots which stretches back to 1295.

The BBC is planning a series of television programmes in Scotland to celebrate the alliance and the link will continue next month

with the launch of the Scottish Tourist Board's first advertising campaign in France. Posters on the Métro will declare *Entre légende et réalité vous êtes dans la vraie Ecosse*.

So far £70,000 has been earmarked by Edinburgh District Council for the Franco-Scottish celebrations but applications have been made to the National Lottery and the European Commission for help in funding the events.

The highlight of the year will be a concert by the Scottish vocal ensemble Cappella Nova in Edinburgh's Greyfriars Church in the presence of the French Ambassador. The ensemble will recreate

the music played at the 1558 wedding of Mary Queen of Scots to François, Dauphin of France.

These days the Auld Alliance is expressed through cultural and sporting exchanges but Scots have not forgotten the political significance of having France as an ally against the common enemy, England. In France, however, the alliance is all but forgotten.

The original agreement was signed by the Scottish king John Balliol and the French monarch Philip IV in 1295. There may have been earlier agreements but that was the first documentary evidence of an offensive and defensive alliance, designed to scupper

Edward I of England. It was renewed by Robert I in 1326 and became the mutually accepted response to English aggression aimed at either party. The agreement was subsequently renewed on at least six occasions.

A year after the alliance was renewed in 1512, the Scots were defeated at the Battle of Flodden, when they were rallying to the defence of the French against Henry VIII. The overwhelming defeat, which claimed the life of the Scots king James IV, led to many Scots questioning the alliance.

But the marriage of James V in Notre Dame Cathedral on New

Year's Day 1537 to Madeleine de Valois, the daughter of Francis I of France, and after her death, to Mary of Guise, strengthened the connection. It reached its height with the marriage of Mary Queen of Scots to the dauphin.

The Treaty of Haddington in 1548 made France the guarantor of Scottish liberty and installed French troops on Scottish soil. The alliance died with Mary Queen of Scots as her son ascended the English throne, but its influence remains in Scottish architecture, law and language.

Many Scots words such as pigot and ashet have French roots. Long after the alliance ended

Scots soldiers continued to seek their fortunes in France, and Scots lawyers learnt to imbibe claret while learning of the common antecedents of some Scots and French laws.

The Auld Alliance has entered Scottish parlance and is still fondly remembered by Scots, who prefer to sport an Ecosse sticker rather than GB on their cars when travelling abroad. In France the alliance means little. Stéphane Crouzet, director of the French Institute in Edinburgh, says: "The French are not familiar with the alliance in the way the Scots are."

Match preview, page 47

Procter and Gamble shares fall

Anti-ageing creams withdrawn after irritation complaints

By LIN JENKINS

SUPERMARKETS and chemists removed two face creams from their shelves yesterday after complaints that they had caused eye irritations.

Procter and Gamble, the American group which makes both Oil of Ulay New Skin Discovery and Max Factor Active Response Cream, sought to play down the impact of the suspended sales after its shares fell 12.5 cents to \$65.125 on the New York Stock Exchange.

The company, which manufactures skincare products for the British market in Nenagh, Co Tipperary, claimed that the cost of withdrawing the creams "will not have a material impact on earnings". Both are "niche" products aimed at women over 40 and account for less than 5 per cent of the lines' sales, the company said.



The skincare market is worth £446m a year

The creams were removed after reports of blurred vision and watery or tingling eyes among about 70 middle-aged and elderly women. Damage was neither serious nor lasting.

Procter and Gamble insisted that the creams were safe

provided women heeded prominent warning labels that the products should not be used near the eyes. But reports of adverse reactions continued and the creams were withdrawn as a precaution.

New Skin Recovery and Active Response Cream vary from most face creams in that they use a chemical exfoliant, beta hydroxy acid, rather than alpha hydroxy acids more commonly used in moisturising creams. Marion Kelly, director-general of the Cosmetics, Toiletries and Perfumers Association, said: "There is some confusion when people talk about hydroxy acids, but the ones causing the problems are not in the great majority. These anti-ageing creams were developed from exfoliants used to treat people with acne. They were found to leave the skin looking better so were then positioned for the whole market." Scientists are developing a new formula that does not irritate the eyes. Other Max Factor and Oil of Ulay skincare products are not affected.

The British skincare market is worth more than £446 million and is growing by 6 per cent a year. According to figures published last year Oil of Ulay was the best-selling moisturiser, followed by Body Shop, Avon, Boots, Johnson's Baby Lotion and Clinique.

Skincare products accounted for 14 per cent of all cosmetics and toiletries sales in 1992. Half of those were facial products, including moisturisers, cleansers, toners, facial scrubs and face masks.

Facial moisturisers are the biggest sellers, with an annual retail value of £368 million, with hand and body moisturisers next at £60 million a year. Most are sold through chemists, with Boots accounting for more than 30 per cent of sales.

However, supermarkets account for a growing proportion, and in the past three years have increased their share of the market by nearly 15 per cent.



Madeleine Smith: praised for "grit and bravery" after being shot by ex-fiance

Jilted fiancé jailed for shooting

A STABLE lad who blasted his ex-fiancee in the leg with a shotgun then kept her hostage for six hours was jailed for ten years yesterday.

A judge at Teesside Crown Court used special powers to increase the sentence on Barry Pearson, 33, after telling him: "It was only when she told you she was bleeding to death that you panicked, put your own skin before other considerations and phoned the police."

Judge Fox paid tribute to Pearson's victim, Madeleine Smith, a young jockey who has fought to ride again despite her terrible injury. "She has shown remarkable grit and bravery," he said. "However, what may remain



Pearson: panicked

of her hopes as a professional jockey, one cannot be at all optimistic about."

The court was told that after Miss Smith, of Osbaldwick, North York-

shire, broke off their engagement they continued to work together at a stables in Leicestershire. She left when he failed to accept the separation and turned violent.

Later they met at layby for Pearson to hand over her belongings, but he shot her then drove her 130 miles to the flat they used to share. He called the police after ignoring her pleas for medical treatment for six hours. Miss Smith spent 18 days in hospital and had four operations.

Pearson, of Grantham in Lincolnshire, was convicted last month of carrying a firearm, kidnapping, and wounding. He was jailed for two, three and five years, to be served consecutively.

Doctor says reaction was 'pure bad luck'

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

THE ingredient responsible for eye irritation in the skin creams which have been withdrawn is widely used by dermatologists.

Salicylic acid loosens the top layer of skin and exposes fresh skin with the aim of achieving a rejuvenating effect. Like other acids used in skin creams, salicylic acid is a hydroxy acid containing both hydroxyl and carboxyl groups. "We use buckets-loads of the stuff," said Dr Ian White, a consultant at St John's Institute of Dermatology at St Thomas's Hospital in London. "It's used for removing warts and verrucas, for treating

acne, and it's found in shampoos as well. We've had no problems whatsoever with it."

Dr White considers Procter & Gamble to have been "very unlucky" to have had problems with the 2 per cent solution of salicylic acid they used in their Oil of Ulay New Skin Discovery and Max Factor Active Response Cream. "They did every test they could have done," he said. "They tested it on animals, and in every other way they could think of. They did their damndest to make sure it was harmless, but none of the tests predicted the problems. It was a fluke — pure bad luck."

Small town plays host to Big Frank's heavyweight hopes

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

THE "cattle shed" at Shepton Mallet may not trip off the tongue of boxing aficionados as easily as Madison Square Garden but the Somerset market town will have its evening of boxing glory tonight.

Yesterday the cider-making town was gearing up for Frank Bruno to fight the American Rodolfo Marin. Shepton Mallet may have heard of Frank but Big Frank, who hopes the venue will be the launchpad for another shot at a world heavyweight title, admits that until he was booked to fight there he had never heard of

Shepton Mallet. However, the incongruity of the setting should not worry Bruno, already familiar as a panto-mime star only 20 miles down the road in Bristol.

Five thousand seats were being installed yesterday at the Showering Pavilion, the multi-purpose exhibition building normally used for storing animals for the Royal Bath and West Show. The ring was being delivered overnight for erection tonight.

Jo Perry, general manager of the centre, said: "We know what everyone from London thinks. It's not fair. But we've got used to it. We have broad shoulders down here. This is a

good, versatile venue with the right capacity and ample parking. That's what clinched it. We shan't let anyone down."

The building is also used for pop concerts, antique fairs, motorcycle and car shows but never before has it staged a professional boxing bout.

Clive King, proprietor of the 17th century Cannards Well Inn, had his 15 bedrooms booked within hours of the fight tickets going on sale. He said: "It's brilliant, a great promotion for the town. Shepton Mallet is only a small town. We have the Bath and West Show but this is something else. It's created so much interest. Frank

wants a another pop at the title and he won't let anyone down."

Local people were among the enthusiasts who snapped up tickets from £20 to £75 to turn the fight into a sell-out within three weeks.

If there is a run on local supplies of champagne, a sea of Babycham will be on hand, for the town is the home of Gaymers, makers of cider and champagne perry. Gaymers took over from Showerings, which gave its name to the centre.

In 1990, a site to be developed as a warehouse by Showerings yielded evidence that the area was one of the earliest centres of Christian belief

when a 4th century amulet was unearthed beneath a skeleton in a coffin. One of the oldest towns of the Mendips (the Shepton is short for Sheptonstone; Mallet the name of the 11th century lords of the manor), it has several places of historical importance, including the market cross and the church tower.

Bruno's arrival will not be the first event to punctuate the peace of this town of 7,000. In 1970, there was a two-day blues and rock festival where order was more or less maintained by Hell's Angels.

A nation waits, page 45



Bruno: hoping for another shot at title

Day Six... Six long days... six days of moral dilemma

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England finally honours the inimitable Wodehouse

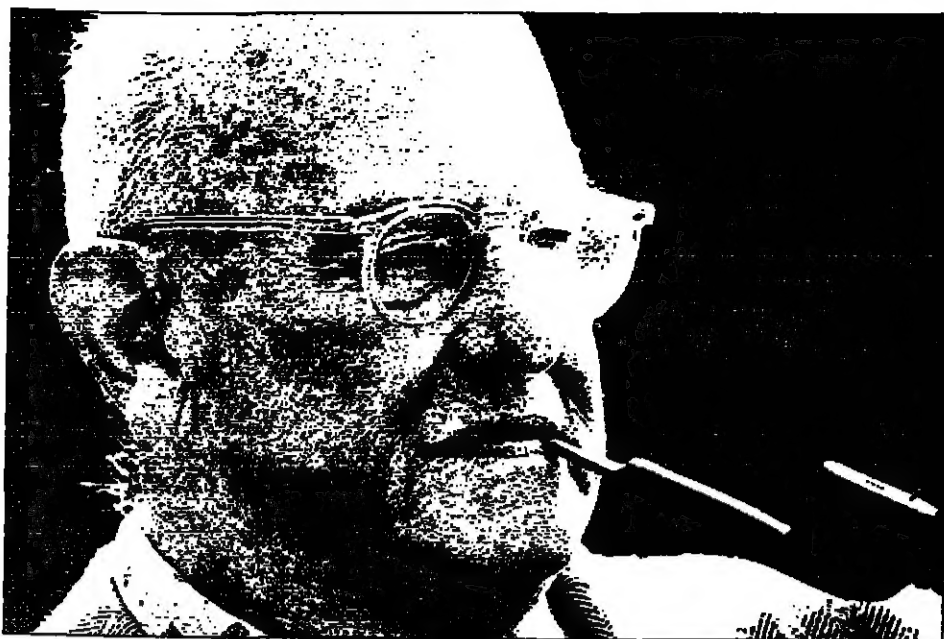
By ALAN HAMILTON

IN THIS twentieth anniversary week of P.G. Wodehouse's death, England is slowly stirring to the memory of its greatest master craftsman of the ludicrous.

A society has been formed. An exhibition is being assembled. One of his rarely seen musical comedies is to be revived. A book on Wodehouse and cricket is in preparation. You could be forgiven for thinking that the ghost of his greatest single mistake, broadcasting to America from Germany during the war, had finally been laid.

But now he is danger of moving from a source of innocent enjoyment to an object of serious study. Richard Morris, a Northampton journalist, recently formed the Wodehouse Society, having discovered to his surprise that no such thing existed in this country, despite fan clubs in America, The Netherlands and Sweden. There is even one in France with only two members, who take it in turn to be president.

Mr Morris, 28, is about to issue the second edition of the mainly named *Wodehouse Society Journal*. The American society's magazine at least goes for a pun, calling itself *Plum Lines* after the master's



P.G. Wodehouse: "wonderful metaphors... the most playful of authors"

affectionate nickname. Mr Morris said yesterday: "I felt there was a particular need to promote Wodehouse's musical comedies, which have become a rather neglected area of his work."

The infant society as yet has only 60 members but they number such luminaries as the actors Stephen Fry and Richard Briers and the novelist Tom Sharpe. The society

has had one early success: Wodehouse's musical comedy *Good Morning Bill* is to be staged at The Palace Theatre, Watford, in June. To employ a word typical of the master, this is spilling news.

At Wodehouse's old school, Dulwich College in south London, which he attended from 1894 to 1900, an exhibition of manuscripts and memorabilia will open to the public

next month, assembled by Dr Jan Piggott, English master and college archivist. "We should have done it last year on the centenary of his arrival at the school, but I'm afraid we didn't get round to it," Dr Piggott said. Sadly, the archivist does not have a gentleman's gentleman to organise such things for him.

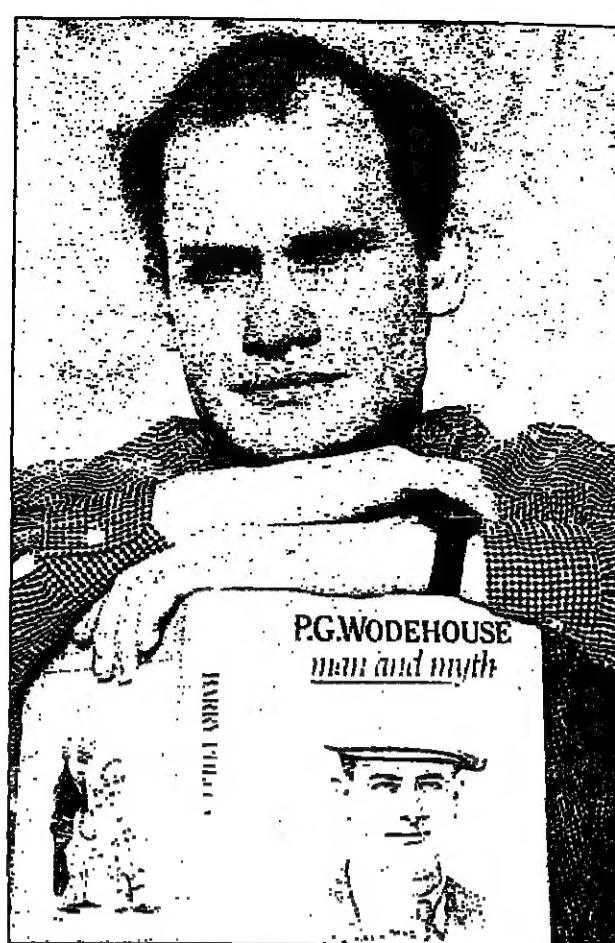
"The appeal of Wodehouse is the appeal of an unfallen

world. For me it is the language, the wonderful metaphors, the ridiculous situations: he is the most playful of authors," Dr Piggott said.

Penguin, which has in print 58 of Wodehouse's 100 titles, reports selling more than two million copies since it first published *Plum* in paperback in 1936. "He is one of those authors who just won't go away," said Paul Smith of Penguin. One day, books about Plum will doubtless outnumber those by him. The latest author to embark on a detailed study of the master is Murray Hedgcock, retired London correspondent of *The Australian* newspaper, who is preparing a treatise on Wodehouse and cricket.

According to Mr Hedgcock, who says he would have been at home in 1930s England "cocooned in *Mezzano Magazines* and *Ovaltine*", the English are "very uncertain about taking a light, humorous writer seriously. They have never been sure how to deal with him. To be a successful English writer, you are supposed to have had a bad childhood."

Twenty years after the author's death at Remsenburg, New York, the revival of interest may lay to rest the two popular misconceptions: that Jeeves was a butler and that Bertie Wooster was a fool.



Morris: discovered to his surprise there was no appreciation society for Wodehouse in Britain

THE SUNDAY TIMES The sirens of the saloon bar

Peggy is your George Orwell beehive-basic barmaid. She has a chest like a dead heat in a Zeppelin race and a grip that could unscrew the turret of a



Chieftain tank. She expects to be flirted with, and if you are rude enough to forget, she'll say: "I expect yours is a large one?" and wink by way of encouragement...

AA Gill offers a guide to the British male's favourite object of desire - in *Style*, The Sunday Times tomorrow



KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Karpov on verge

With a display of virtuoso endgame technique in a position that had seemed likely to be a draw, FIDE champion Anatoly Karpov has established a virtually unassailable lead against his opponent the Belorussian grandmaster Boris Gelfand.

The match continues in Sanghi Nagar, India, until one player reaches 5.5 points. However, with the score now 5-3 in his favour, there can be little doubt that Karpov will now advance to the final where his opponent will be the American Gata Kamsky.

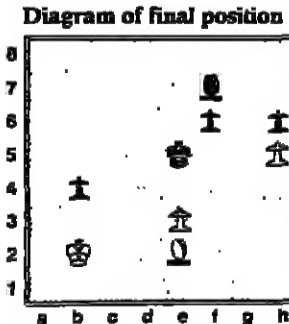
White: Boris Gelfand
Black: Anatoly Karpov
FIDE Candidates.
Sanghi Nagar.
Game 7, January 1995

Queen's Indian Defence

- | | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 1 | c4 | Nf3 |
| 2 | d4 | e6 |
| 3 | Nf3 | b6 |
| 4 | e3 | Bb7 |
| 5 | Nc3 | d5 |
| 6 | cxd5 | exd5 |
| 7 | Bb5+ | 0-0 |
| 8 | Bd3 | 0-0 |
| 9 | 0-0 | Nbd7 |
| 10 | b3 | Bd6 |
| 11 | Bb2 | Re6 |
| 12 | Rc1 | Oe7 |
| 13 | Ne2 | g6 |
| 14 | Ng3 | Ba3 |
| 15 | Oe2 | Bd2 |
| 16 | Rf1 | 0-0 |
| 17 | Oc2 | Bd2 |
| 18 | Oe2 | c5 |
| 19 | Rd1 | Rac8 |
| 20 | Ne2 | a6 |
| 21 | Rc2 | Qd4 |
| 22 | Nxd4 | Rac2 |
| 23 | Bxc2 | Rc8 |
| 24 | Rc1 | Ne4 |
| 25 | Bd3 | Rxc1+ |
| 26 | Oxc1 | Oc5 |
| 27 | Qd1 | b5 |
| 28 | Ne2 | b4 |
| 29 | Qa1 | Qd6 |
| 30 | Qd4 | Qc5 |
| 31 | Qa1 | Qd6 |
| 32 | h3 | Nd5 |
| 33 | Bc2 | Oe5 |
| 34 | Oe5 | Qe5 |

- | | |
|----|-------|
| 35 | Nxe5 |
| 36 | Nf3 |
| 37 | Ne1 |
| 38 | f3 |
| 39 | g4 |
| 40 | Kf2 |
| 41 | h4 |
| 42 | h5 |
| 43 | ggh5 |
| 44 | Ng9 |
| 45 | Bg6 |
| 46 | Kg2 |
| 47 | Nc2 |
| 48 | h4 |
| 49 | Kf2 |
| 50 | Nd4 |
| 51 | Nxb5+ |
| 52 | Ke1 |
| 53 | Bd3 |
| 54 | Be2 |
| 55 | Nd5+ |
| 56 | Kd2 |
| 57 | Bd3 |
| 58 | Bc2 |
| 59 | Bg6 |
| 60 | Bc2 |
| 61 | Bd1 |
| 62 | Bf3 |
| 63 | Kc1 |
| 64 | Kd2 |
| 65 | Ba4 |
| 66 | Be2 |
| 67 | Bf3 |
| 68 | Bd1 |
| 69 | Kd3 |
| 70 | Ke4 |
| 71 | Kf5 |
| 72 | Ke4 |
| 73 | f5 |
| 74 | Kd3 |
| 75 | Kcd2 |
| 76 | Be2 |
| 77 | Kc1 |
| 78 | Kd2 |
| 79 | Bd3 |
| 80 | Bd2 |
| 81 | Ka5 |

Diagram of final position



Winning Move.
Weekend, page 23



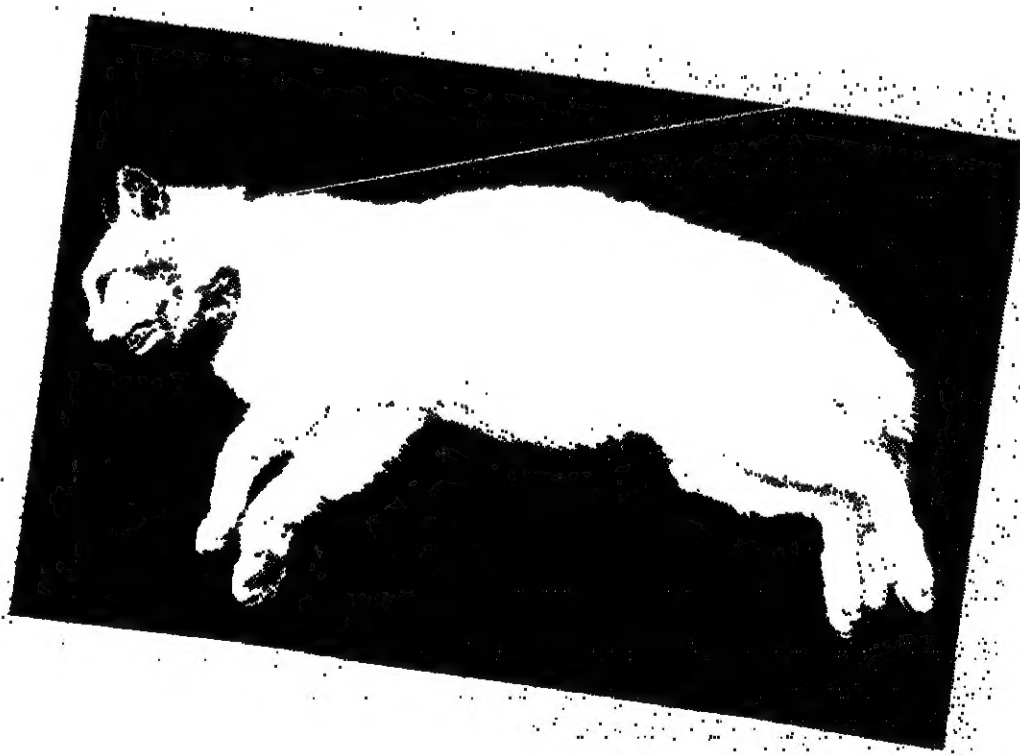
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As well as being the most primitive form of hunting (Stone Age man used them) snares are the most inefficient. Set them to catch foxes and you're just as likely to find cats and dogs, deer and badgers or farm animals in them. Animals snared around the waist are slowly disembowelled, left alive with intestines hanging out for days. Caught by the leg they sometimes tear it off to crawl away and die later. Around the neck they are slowly strangled and almost decapitated. The Wild Mammals (Protection) Bill will prevent random snaring. Please write to your MP and urge them to vote in favour on March 3rd. Before your pet gets it in the neck...stomach or leg.



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Euro loses end d sales o

By JONATHAN PRYNN

EUROTUNNEL has failed in its attempts to block the £60 million-a-year trade in duty free sales on cross-Channel ferries and hovercraft.

Two High Court judges yesterday threw out the Channel Tunnel operator's contention — that duty-free sale amount to an unfair trading advantage — on the technical ground that it had taken too long to prepare its case.

The company was also barred from going to the European Court of Justice. However the judges, Lord Justice Balcombe and Mr Justice Tucker, did leave the door open to a fresh legal challenge directed specifically at day-trip "booze cruises".

The ruling means that the highly lucrative duty-free trade on ferries can continue. About 30 million Britons a year purchase duty-free items worth an estimated £1.3 billion: it costs the Exchequer more than £400 million.

Cigarettes and drink are the most popular duty-free items. Although prices vary enormously, a bottle of Scotch whisky costing about £18 to £19 in the UK might be as little as £10 on a ferry. Similarly, people buying 200 cigarettes can save about £5. Eurotunnel argues that such sales are unfair because the profits are used to subsidise ferry tickets.

John Noulton, Eurotunnel's director of public affairs, said: "Today's decision is very dis-

Let lay Commu

By RUTH

A LEADING evangelical bishop in the Church of England has declared his support for lay celebration of Holy Communion, opening an issue that could divide the church more deeply than the ordination of women priests.

Lay celebration has split the Anglican church in Australia, where one synod has voted in favour. Most church leaders fear that lay celebration would undermine the tradition of separate priesthood, diaconate and laity in the church. Hopes for unity with the Roman Catholic and other churches would be dashed. But the Right Rev

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All fares listed are return from be booked by the 2nd March these and many other World O

0.

'Booze cruises' survive

Eurotunnel loses fight to end duty-free sales on ferries

By Jonathan Pryn, Transport Correspondent

EUROTUNNEL has failed in its attempts to block the £600 million-a-year trade in duty-free sales on cross-Channel ferries and hovercraft.

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John Noulton, Eurotunnel's director of public affairs, said: "Today's decision is very dis-

appointing for us. It's been taken on procedural grounds but substantive issues were raised and have not been addressed. We shall now be studying the judgment and considering any future moves in the light of it. It is too early to say yet whether we shall come back to court on the question of the booze cruises."

The ferry operators welcomed the ruling as "a victory for common sense". P&O European Ferries said: "Millions of people in Europe benefit from duty- and tax-free shopping. Duty-free sales have been an integral part of the revenue structure of ferries and airlines since the Second World War."

A spokesman for Stena Sealink said: "Duty-free sales have played a vital role in sustaining ferry companies in their competition with each other and in the face of increasing competition with the Channel Tunnel."

The ferry operators receive roughly a third of their revenues from on-board sales, which are believed to subsidise ticket prices by up to £100 million a year.

Eurotunnel already sells duty-free goods at Folkestone and Calais but made no provision for on-board Le Shuttle sales because it expected duty-free shopping to be abolished. It is now considering introducing "catalogue" sales of duty-free goods.



Lord Sutch, narrowly beaten by Robert Buckland, said: "by mistake people voted for the wrong loony party"

Lord Sutch narrowly fails to beat Tory

By Jill Sherman, Political Correspondent

SCREAMING Lord Sutch was last night celebrating one of the Monster Raving Loony Party's best by-election results after narrowly failing to beat the Tories in Iswyn, in Gwent, on Thursday night.

Lord Sutch, who gained 506 votes, claimed that voters had decided to vote for the only party opposed to Europe. After coming a respectable fifth in the poll, he said: "We had thought we would beat the Tories but by mistake people voted for the wrong loony party."

The Tories struggled to put a positive gloss on their third worst by-election result since 1918. They polled 913 votes, coming fourth behind Plaid Cymru and the Liberal Democrats. Party sources argued that any by-election was just a



Don Touhig, who held the seat for Labour

snapshot and thus had little wider relevance. They also pointed out that both Conservative and Labour voters had stayed at home suggesting that there was little enthusiasm for Labour policies.

Don Touhig, Neil Kinnoch's successor as Labour

RESULT	
Don Touhig (Lab)	18,030
Jocelyn Davies (PC)	2,933
John Bushell (LD)	2,448
Robert Buckland (C)	913
David Sutch (Loony)	508
Hugh Moelewyn Hughes (UK Independence)	289
Timothy Rees (Natural Law)	47
Labour majority	13,097

MP, who romped home with a majority of 13,097, said: "The electors of Iswyn have destroyed [the Tories] last vestiges of credibility."

Labour sources said that the Tories, who at the 1992 general election came second, had at one stage looked likely to scrape into third place this time. However, after a late surge of campaigning by the Liberal Dem-

ocrats, and a bad last two days for the Tories, John Bushell, the Liberal Democrat candidate, held on.

Although Labour's vote fell from 30,908 at the 1992 election to 16,030 on a very low turnout of 45 per cent, party chiefs were satisfied that their share of the vote had largely held. Ron Davies, the Shadow Welsh Secretary, said the Conservatives now faced electoral annihilation in Wales. "On this showing, they would be hard-pressed to keep a single constituency. Less than one voter in 50 in Iswyn turned out to support them."

Tony Blair, the Labour leader, also hailed another by-election success, after the party's victory in Dudley West in December: "The people of Wales, like people all over Britain, cannot wait to see the back of the Tories."

Credo

Feeding a hunger for spiritual peace

Akbar Ahmed

MILLIONS of people throughout the world, including thousands in Britain, are fasting this month. It is Ramadan, the month when Muslims fast from early dawn to sunset. Many of us like to use this time to think of the millions less fortunate than ourselves — those whose lives are broken, persecuted minorities, refugees, or people experiencing the heartache of everyday life.

Fasting is not special to Muslims. From Jesus to Gandhi, the religious figures of history have done it. Dilemmas, doubts, fears and hopes

are put into perspective when the stomach is empty. A person may dream dreams and clarify the vision. Fasting is also an effective way to check the consumerism that is all around us — the fast foods, the snacks, the images on television. Fasting forces us to pause, to say to ourselves we can do without this.

Fasting is not self-punishment. The aim is not to lose weight to satisfy the ego. It is to challenge the inner reserves, to draw on the spiritual. Rising in the early hours for the morning meal and prayers, then fasting all day and, finally, breaking the fast together cements people like nothing else during the routine of the year. It is this aspect of Islam that ensures continuity from one generation to the next.

It also ensures equality between the sexes. Women are as enthusiastic as the men, if not more. It is perhaps the one time when the rich and powerful are forced to think of those who have little to eat during the whole year.

Ramadan creates a whole self-contained world around Muslims. From dawn to dusk an individual is either preparing for the fast, fasting or praying. In effect there is a withdrawal from the hurly-burly of the outside, real world. The heartache and pain of living are reduced, shrunk into perspective. The Koran emphasises patience; it is one of the great virtues, it lends balance and sobriety.

For Muslims the importance of the month is underlined in the Koran. Indeed it was revealed to the holy prophet while he was in the caves outside Mecca, fasting and praying. Sura 97 points out that the devotion on one night, the famous "Night of Power" towards the end of the month, by which time a kind of numbness and heightened ecstasy grip the faster, is equal to a thousand months of devotion. The gates of mercy, compassion and kindness are open.

At a time when there is so much suffering in our world a return to the religious truths symbolised by the Ramadan fast can show that when all is lost there is still hope, that faith will triumph.

□ Professor Akbar Ahmed is a fellow of Selwyn College, Cambridge

At your service. Weekend, page 2

Let lay people celebrate Communion, says bishop

By Ruth Gledhill, Religion Correspondent

A LEADING evangelical bishop in the Church of England has declared his support for lay celebration of Holy Communion, opening an issue that could divide the church more deeply than the ordination of women priests.

Lay celebration has split the Anglican church in Australia, where one synod has voted in favour. Most church leaders fear that lay celebration would undermine the tradition of separate priesthood, diaconate and laity in the church. Hopes for unity with the Roman Catholic and other churches would be dashed. But the Right Rev

Gavin Reid, the Bishop of Middlesbrough, says there is more to priestly ministry than "standing behind communion tables". Bishop Reid, an assistant to the Archbishop of Canterbury, called for "provisional lay celebration" when a congregation could not find a priest.

A bishop should be able, in extreme circumstances, "to grant specific permission for a lay celebration of the Eucharist," he told Southwark diocesan evangelical union, southeast London. "What I have in mind is a service without any central figure leading from behind the

Lord's Table and where a shortened form of the eucharistic prayer is said by the priesthood that is present — namely the congregation itself."

Canon law says: "No person shall consecrate and administer the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper unless he shall have been ordained priest by episcopal ordination." The Bishop of London, Dr David Hope, said in yesterday's *Church Times* that he would be "very wary" of lay celebration.

At Your Service. Weekend, page 2



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Bhutto looks both ways to appease West and clerics

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN ISLAMABAD

BENAZIR BHUTTO is two people. One is a Western-educated liberal, an advocate of women's rights, a champion of the poor and a stern critic of Islamic extremism.

The other is a super-rich feudal landlord who does nothing about laws which humiliate women, the leader of an increasingly intolerant and class-divided Islamic state.

The conservative Miss Bhutto plays the Islamic card to win approval from influential clergy, creating a febrile religious atmosphere in which a Lahore judge felt able, or obliged, to convict a 14-year-old Christian boy for blasphemy. The child was 12 when the alleged offence was committed at a village mosque outside Lahore. Death is mandatory for blasphemy under changes to the penal code in 1993.

Salamat Masih is thus on death row. This violates every international convention on

the rights of children and represents a significant advance in state brutality in the name of religion. Miss Bhutto at home has been muted in her reaction, saying she was shocked and saddened but would not interfere with the legal process. When she visits the United States in April, she is likely to metamorphose into an outraged progressive.

For the progressive Miss Bhutto always travels overseas: Pakistanis see only the conservative, domestic version. Abroad, she is sympathetic to Pakistani women who are jailed for being raped, and critical of the undermining of the judicial system by the parallel operation of Sharia (Islamic) courts. Once home, she does nothing to try to redress the institutionalised persecution of women, fearing the power of extremists.

Overseas, she denies that her Government facilitates the supply of guns and money for

war in Indian Kashmir. At home, she practically confirms it because it plays well politically and appeals to jingoistic nationalism. The foreign Miss Bhutto denies that Pakistan has nuclear bombs: the domestic version exploits national pride in this symbol of virility and defiance of the West.

While in America, she will deride the Islamic zealots to whom she bends the knee at home. Pakistan, in danger of unravelling from drugs, violence, tribal feuds and ethnic battles, has only two unifying factors: Islam and India. Harmony with India is thus not an option for Pakistan, because it would leave only Islam to define the country. That is why Islamabad will never willingly stop fuelling Muslim rebellion in the Kashmir Valley. Pakistan became an Islamic state in 1956, and since then, intolerance and persecution of religious mi-



Benazir Bhutto the progressive is outraged by the threatened hanging of a child, but as a pragmatist she must accommodate the clergy

norities, comprising 5 per cent of the 123-million population, have increased notch by notch. The threatened hanging of a Christian boy is the high point of bigotry. Various govern-

ments since the early 1980s have added an Islamic flavour to civil and criminal law, leaving minorities vulnerable and afraid. The two million Christians are especially fearful. The vague provisions of a set of legislation known collec-

tively as the blasphemy laws, providing severe penalties for offences against Islam, create and sustain religious persecution. When next interviewed by a Western journalist, Miss Bhutto the progressive will

doubtless be outraged by the threatened child-hanging. No such strident sentiments will be uttered at home by Miss Bhutto the pragmatist, who must accommodate the clergy. Women require three male Muslim witnesses to prove rape. Victims fear complaining to the police because, unable to substantiate their allegations, they risk prosecution for fornication or adultery.

The evidence against Salamat Masih is thin. The law requires only one priest to allege blasphemy, giving local clergy terrifying power over the poor majority. No private lawyer was willing to represent the accused Christians.

The judge who tried Salamat asked for police protection, which was refused.

Christians, Hindus and Sikhs are stunned by the case. Miss Bhutto noted that it would embarrass her on her American trip. She spoke of the need to amend the law to stop it being abused, but she knows, as do the clergy, that it would be political suicide to try.

The boy and his uncle stand a good chance of acquittal on appeal if the judge decides to be courageous. But as Bishop Azariah of the Christian denominational Church of Pakistan noted, "they will probably never be safe in their own country".

Student force holds key to Kabul peace

BY CHRISTOPHER THOMAS

A UNITED NATIONS plane arrived in Kabul yesterday carrying the first members of a proposed interim council due to assume power in the next few days. The UN had to seek assurances that the aircraft would not be shot down, a measure of the tensions that have brought renewed doubts about prospects for peace.

The fate of the UN plan, negotiated over the past six months between various former Mujahidin groups, depends on the attitude of the new Islamic students' force, Taleban, which has consolidated its positions on the southern outskirts of Kabul. It has made clear its intention to occupy the capital, but there has been no fighting so far with government troops.

The UN hopes Taleban will join the interim administration, although the group has

said it would have nothing to do with those it accuses of destroying Afghanistan since the collapse of the Communist Government in April 1992. Mahmood Mesri, the UN envoy to Afghanistan who was on board yesterday's flight, the first plane to land at Kabul airport for more than a year because of heavy fighting, said that he expected President Rabbani to step down on Monday.

Pakistan fears that the Pashtun-based Taleban could threaten stability in its largely Pashtun North-West Frontier Province. It denies involvement in creating Taleban, although the group has links with influential Pakistani clerics. It grew out of Islamic religious schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The latest town to fall to Taleban is Puli Charkhi, on Kabul's eastern outskirts.

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Exile height power

A CLOSE ally of Deng Xiaoping, China's reformist leader, has stepped up as chairman of a key company at a time when diplomats say that the Mr Deng in the Communist Party hierarchy is played down.

Zhou Guanzu, a close ally of Mr Deng, fought against the Ngais under his command in 1949, has suddenly been placed as chairman of Shougang Corporation, formerly the Capital Iron Steel Corporation, which is a central part of China's industrial apparatus. He has also been appointed as party secretary of Shougang.

Some of the free-market policies of Mr Zhou, 70, have been controversial and he has made many enemies, but his dismissal could be a signal for other reform-minded allies when Mr Deng passes from the scene. "His ouster should announce a period of particular uncertainty," one envoy in Beijing said. "His enemies may have perceived a weakness in current diminishing Deng and struggle." The move

Japanese angered by quake profiteers

FROM GWYN ROBINSON IN TOKYO

TENS of thousands of people in Kobe observed a minute of silence at noon yesterday, a month since an earthquake razed the central Jap city and killed at least 5,000 people.

As bells tolled on the Hyogo prefectural hall, workers reconstruction sites, dug at evacuation centres and people on the streets bowed their heads in the disaster. The disaster has brought profiteering and people have deepened the losses which at first left residents. Many of the survivors left homeless, suffering severe psychological problems.

Grief has been compounded by unscrupulous profiteers, who are charging exorbitant prices for necessities and services. It is one of the most notorious cases of profiteering, a company raised the price of rice from 300 yen each (about \$3.00) to 500 yen (about \$5.00).

Others whose homes were destroyed are contending with spiralling charges demolition and removal rubble — before they can even contemplate the soaring cost of rebuilding. In a case where a homeowner was quoted 200,000 yen to demolish ruins of his home, but the day was told by the contractor that the job would cost 1 million yen.

In response to such a hotline which received more than 400 complaints in the days. The Government unveiled an extra budget of \$6.5 billion yesterday to finance reconstruction.

Petty crime is another growing phenomenon. There reports almost every day of looting and theft. And students have said they afraid even to hang clothes to dry.

"There's a large number of refugees who have lost everything. Many just walk around the streets in a daze — it's surprising that some aren't stealing, but it's very sad," one survivor said.

The Japanese media reported that foreigners responsible for the looting in Kobe, as one of Japan's largest port cities, has large diverse foreign population including Britons, Koreans, Chinese. One media reported a priest at a temple who said that "some or eight men, Iranian Chinese, have been robbing homes and shops".

The Kobe authorities reacted immediately by posting large signs in evacuation centres, urging people to ignore the rumours about foreigners. But the rumour-mongers smacked uncomfortably of hysteria, a wave of xenophobia which swept Tokyo after the great earthquake of 1923 when 140,000 people died. After the quake, residents went on the rampage, killing thousands of Koreans.

Exit of Deng ally heightens Peking power struggle

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN PEKING

A CLOSE ally of Deng Xiaoping, China's reforming senior leader, has stepped down as chairman of a key state company at a time when Mr Deng in the Communist Party hierarchy is being played down.

Zhou Guanzu, a protégé of the ailing Mr Deng, who fought against the Nationalists under his command in the 1940s, has suddenly been replaced as chairman of the huge Shougang Corporation, formerly the Capital Iron and Steel Corporation, which is a central part of China's state apparatus. He has also lost his job as party secretary at Shougang.

Some of the free-sending policies of Mr Zhou, 77, have been controversial and he has made many enemies, but his likely dismissal could be a signal for other reform-minded allies when Mr Deng passes from the scene. "That his ouster should come now, at a period of particular uncertainty, should not come as a surprise," one envoy noted last night. "His enemies may have perceived a weakness in the current diminishing of Deng, and struck." The move comes

on its own in such a risky way. Manila has a mutual defence treaty with Washington, but the Americans have already withdrawn from their sea and air bases at Subic Bay and Clark in the Philippines' best. During the present dispute, the Americans have adopted a hands-off approach, advising that the dispute be solved peacefully.

Some envoys see these incidents as connected. In recent weeks, the Chinese press and television have been building up Jiang Zemin, 68, the President and party chief, as the core of a collective leadership to replace Mr Deng, a former ally of Mao Tse-tung, who later purged him.

"The trouble is no one is really in charge in the run-up to the post-Deng era," said one diplomat. "Jiang is not a giant figure and does not have the self-confidence to make major decisions. It is a matter of muddling through."

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Gong Li, left, and Zhang Yimou on the set in Shanghai

Film lovers cut great off-screen romance

FROM REUTERS IN SHANGHAI

THE glamour couple of the Chinese film world, the director Zhang Yimou and the actress Gong Li, have split up, ending a collaboration that produced a string of award-winning movies, including *Raise the Red Lantern* and *Red Sorghum*, newspapers said.

Zhang and Gong were lovers, famous in China as much for their off-screen romance as for their controversial pictures that swept film prizes in the West. Now Gong, the nearest thing China has to a Hollywood superstar, is romantically linked with the China-based manager of a foreign company and has walked out on Zhang, the *Wen Wei* newspaper said yesterday without naming names. "The love affair between China's cinematic golden couple is over," it said.

"Yes, we've split up," Zhang was quoted as saying in an interview with the *Xinmin Evening News* on Thursday. "I respect her choice. From the bottom of my heart, I hope she has a happy life and success in her work." The rift came to a head during the making of Zhang's latest film, set in Shanghai in the 1930s, starring Gong as a gangster's girl who struggles through life as a nightclub singer. Gong was often late on set, took days off and lacked conviction.

China's huge demand for energy lures Americans

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

WITH a Sino-American trade war starting in Peking, Hazel O'Leary, the US Commerce Secretary, flew into Hong Kong yesterday on her way to China to focus on what she said was "the largest potential energy market in the world".

Ms O'Leary and her entourage of 45 corporation presidents and chief executives and five bankers go to Shanghai tomorrow and to Peking on Monday. She said that she intended "to put heat under the kettle to move projects", and her goal was "to get into the China energy market". Over the next 17 years, Ms O'Leary said, China and India would require 45 per cent of the world's capital investment in energy, and in the same period China alone would consume 20 per cent of the world's electricity capacity.

"My department has an excellent and cordial relationship with China," she said. "We are focusing on their needs long-term. I know there are difficulties over intellectual property rights, but all countries go through a rough patch."

Ms O'Leary, who arrived in Hong Kong from India, issued a discreet warning to China. "In India we have signed \$10 billion of deals in the last year. American businessmen will go wherever the climate is best."

Japanese angered by quake profiteers

FROM GWEN ROBINSON IN TOKYO

TENS of thousands of people in Kobe observed a minute of silence at noon yesterday, a month since an earthquake razed the central Japan city and killed at least 5,390 people.

As bells tolled on the Hyogo prefectural hall, workers at reconstruction sites, refugees at evacuation centres and people on the streets stopped and bowed their heads. Since the disaster fears of rampant profiteering and petty crime have deepened the sense of loss which at first rallied residents. Many of the 215,000 survivors left homeless are suffering severe psychological problems.

Grief has been compounded by unscrupulous entrepreneurs, who are charging exorbitant prices for basic goods and services. None of the most notorious cases of profiteering, a company increased the price of rice from 300 yen each (about £2) to 5,000 yen (about £3).

Others whose homes were destroyed are contending with spiralling charges for demolition and removal of rubble—before they can even contemplate the soaring costs of rebuilding. In a case which recently came to light, one homeowner was quoted 200,000 yen to demolish the ruins of his home, but the next day was told by the same contractor that the job would cost 1 million yen.

In response to such cases the Government has set up a hotline which received more than 400 complaints in three days. The Government also unveiled an extra budget of £6.5 billion yesterday to finance reconstruction.

Petty crime is another growing phenomenon. There are reports almost every day of looting and theft, and residents have said they are afraid even to hang out clothes to dry.

"There's a large number of refugees who have lost everything. Many just walk around the streets in a daze—it's not surprising that some resort to stealing, but it's very scary," one survivor said.

The Japanese media have reported that foreigners are responsible for the looting. Kobe, as one of Japan's largest port cities, has large and diverse foreign populations including Britons, Koreans and Chinese. One media report quoted a priest at a local temple who said that "seven or eight men, Iranian and Chinese, have been robbing homes and shops".

The Kobe authorities reacted immediately by posting large signs in evacuation centres, urging people to ignore the rumours about foreigners. But the rumour-hungry hysteria of xenophobia which swept Tokyo after the great earthquake of 1923, when 140,000 people died. After the quake, killing thousands of Koreans.

US vote abolishes slavery

New York: Closing the book on the American Civil War, Mississippi will soon become the last American state officially to abolish slavery—130 years after the conflict ended (James Bone writes).

In a symbolic vote on Thursday, the Upper House of the state legislature finally endorsed the 13th Amendment to the US Constitution, which outlaws slavery. The lower chamber will soon follow suit.

When the Civil War ended in 1865, 27 states approved the 13th Amendment, which reads in part: "Neither slavery nor involuntary service... shall exist within the US." Mississippi is the last of the nine hold-out states to ratify it.

Artillery mars Chechnia lull

Moscow: Russian and Chechen military commanders yesterday agreed to extend the five-day-old ceasefire in Chechnia by another 48 hours, according to reports from the region (Anatol Lieven writes).

The Russian news agency Interfax, however, reported several overnight breaches of the existing ceasefire, with Russian artillery firing on Chechen positions south of Grozny, and the Chechens replying in kind.

Peace deal in border dispute

Brasilia: Ecuador and Peru yesterday signed a peace treaty ending a three-week border dispute which caused several dozen deaths. The treaty confirms the end of hostilities and calls for an observer mission of representatives of the four mediator countries—Argentina, Brazil, Chile and the United States—to supervise a gradual demilitarisation of the war zone within 48 hours. (Reuters)

PLO 'ready to compromise'

Jerusalem: Yasser Arafat, the Palestine Liberation Organisation leader, rejected an Israeli proposal that, as a step towards expanding Palestinian self-rule, he start running the West Bank towns of Jenin while Israeli troops remain there. However, a senior Palestinian negotiator said the PLO was ready to compromise and accept a gradual Israeli troop withdrawal from West Bank towns. (AP)

One wedding and a funeral

Bucharest: A bride and groom beat up a drunken Romanian priest at the altar because he read out a funeral oration during their wedding, the news agency Rompres said. It said the priest had been involved in a series of drunken brawls. (Reuters)

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Hardline Mandela declares war on crime and anarchy

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK AND MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

BY MARTIN FLETCHER

BY MARTIN FLETCHER

Nomatyala Hangana, a South African MP, arriving for yesterday's first 1995 session in a dress reflecting the Africanisation of parliament under democracy

By R. W. JOHNSON

Asked: "What good things has the Government already done?" 36 per cent of blacks replied "nothing", a figure that

dissatisfied. The least dissatisfied groups, such as informal traders and domestic servants, tend to be supporters of Inkatha or the National Party.

Mandela: taking salute at opening of parliament

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Why Europe has turned into a yoke

Britain has ceded too much to Brussels, says Norman Lamont

When does a state cease to be a sovereign state? A state might surrender much of its economic powers and yet have control over its defence and foreign policy.

If a state has surrendered much of its powers to make its own laws; much of its power to determine its own taxation; much of its power to control immigration; and the right to control its own monetary policy, then the point has come when that state has ceased to be a sovereign state. It is difficult to identify the precise moment this happens when those who drive the process will not admit what is happening.

I can only give my view, as someone who has served in Government for 13 years, that that moment is now approaching. If we go much further, the Government of Britain will have more resemblance to the State of Delaware than to a sovereign independent government.

We are told "Don't be dogmatic." "Judge each issue on its merits." "Ask yourselves the question is this proposal going to further Britain's interests?" The trouble is that it is not what we have done in the past. Instead we said "We mustn't be isolated."

"We must retain our influence." "If we accepted the test 'Does it further Britain's interests?' would we ever have signed up to the Common Fisheries Policy?"

The truth is that many developments in Europe have occurred not because they serve any purpose, but simply because they satisfy some people's ideas of "building Europe".

Free trade in Europe is a good idea but the single market has been increasingly used by Brussels in a wholly bogus way to lever out far more power than was necessary to remove barriers to trade. In the name of the single market, Brussels tries to harmonise virtually every economic or social programme. We have already seen how our opt-out from the social chapter can be eroded by using the single market route.

Quite separately from the Maastricht Treaty there is constant pressure from the Commission to harmonise tax regimes: excise duties, VAT, corporate taxes. Again this is not necessary for a single market. The United States is a large single market which has a number of different tax regimes, corporate and indirect. But that is not enough for the Brussels bureaucrats.

At least Britain can vote on these matters in the Council of Ministers. Britain has no control at all over the European Court of Justice. This body does not simply decide on the consistency of application of EU law in member states. It makes law. It has strengthened the status of EU law and thus weakened the status of member states' own law and it has extended the EU's ability to interfere in our affairs.

I therefore have a great deal of sympathy with those, like the Home Secretary, who in a recent speech expressed concern about the European

Court of Justice. The court is one of the defining features of the EU. It is what makes it different from any other international organisation. Its supremacy over the member states and their legal systems is unique and represents a clear surrender of sovereignty.

The power of the Court stems solely from the treaties we have signed. In complaining about the Court, we are really complaining about the nature of the EU itself, and acknowledging that the treaties we have signed gave too much away. Curbing its power will mean revising those treaties. Those treaties have created institutions with their own life which have power over us.

Standing still on an escalator does not stop it. We need to get off the escalator altogether. The continuing momentum for European integration means that Britain will not be able to resist unless we are very determined to draw a clear and firm line.

The subsidiarity provisions of the Maastricht Treaty were meant to transfer powers back to national parliaments. That policy has totally failed. No powers of any significance have been repatriated to national governments. Instead the British people will go on being told "Don't worry, old boy. We're still winning the argument in Europe." That sounds less and less reassuring by the day.

There are few Euro-sceptics amongst the leaders of the other European countries. The leaders of Europe have not hidden their aims from their people. They profess it openly and wish to inspire their people with their vision of it.

We have signed up to a Europe which has a parliament, a passport, citizenship, a flag, an anthem and wants to have a single currency, an army and a foreign policy. Who can doubt that the ambition of Europe's politicians is to create a United States of Europe with a federal government? It is strange that those who say that the nation state is out of date are those who are keenest to assume the trappings of a nation state for Europe.

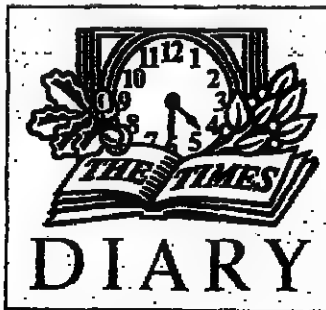
Britain must make clear that it will not hand over any more of its rights to Europe. We should say "no" to a single currency, "no" to the future of political integration and "no" to further powers to the European Parliament and the European Commission.

We must recognise that we may not be able to stop other countries agreeing among themselves that they want closer political union. If that happens we will need special arrangements for Britain. Whether that means that Britain remains a full member of the European Union or the Economic Area is a secondary issue. What matters is restoring the right of the people of this country to say how Britain should be governed.

It has been said that the British Empire was created in a fit of absent-mindedness. Let no future historian write that Britain lost its independence in a fit of self-delusion.

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The policies of women politicians are, by definition, unlikely to appeal to most women, Janet Daley argues

Clare Short, Labour's spokesperson on women's issues, has proposed that all Whitehall departments be equipped with feminist inquisitors to "monitor" the effect on women of public policy. Tory MPs have labelled them "sex spies", which makes the whole enterprise sound far more exciting than it really is. But perhaps that just reflects the prevailing preoccupations of Tory backbenchers. The new inquisitors would actually be the sort of dreary equality surveillance officers familiar to anyone living under a Labour council. They would enforce anti-sexist guidelines like Maoist thought police and report on the performance of their department in any area which could be seen to affect the interests of women.

But what are the real interests of women and who is best suited to protecting them? Or, to put it another way, what are the interests of real women and who is in a position to understand them? It should not be that hard to find out. Women are not an arcane sect or an obscure minority group: being a woman is perfectly ordinary and mainstream. In fact being a woman is slightly more normal than being a man, since more than half the population is female.

Ah, say the spokespersons, that is just the point. Although women make

Beware the female thought police

up half the country, their concerns are not given an appropriate amount of attention by government. They are drastically under-represented in Parliament and in the Civil Service and so their needs are ignored by men who conceive and administer legislation in their own interests. The only remedy for this is to get far more women into public life.

All of the premises in this argument are tenuous and its conclusion is invalid. Nonetheless, it is accepted by all the major political parties, who have allowed themselves to be bullied into adopting these absurd assumptions uncritically. There is now considerable pressure to propel more women into political life — in the case of the Government, to elevate women to the Cabinet, whether or not they are sufficiently experienced or capable.

And the Labour Party has taken to

insisting on "recommending" as they put it at Walworth Road that females — however alien to the local ethos — are adopted as candidates by constituency parties which would prefer to field men. And all of this patent unfairness and enforced prejudice is done in the name of an argument which does not hold water.

When exactly did we decide to accept the idea that for any section of society to be treated fairly, its representation in government must be in exact mathematical proportion to its numbers in the population? We always used to assume that in our system, everyone needed a vote — a say in electing the representative who was there to defend his or her interests.

Providing that every citizen has a right to elect or sack the person who legislates in his or her name, the

purposes of democracy — of governing according to the will of the people — should be met. Any group which cannot organise effective pressure on its elected representative to get what it wants must ask itself how much of the popular will it actually represents.

Perhaps even more basic than this is the fallacy that representatives who are like you in some significant respect — like skin colour, or genital plumbing — will necessarily be better able (or more likely) to represent your own interests. Did Clare Short herself feel that Margaret Thatcher was closer to understanding her own needs than is, say, Tony Blair? Do most of the feminist activists in the Labour Party feel that their views are shared more by Ann Widdecombe than by Jack Straw? Is a woman, simply by virtue of being female, more able to interpret the

political desires of other women? Let me propose the ultimate heresy: most women are not prepared to sacrifice their personal lives for professional advancement in the way that political careers demand. Thus, the sort of women who do make those sacrifices are, by definition, unlike most women. They are, if anything, more likely to misrepresent or misunderstand the conditions of ordinary female existence than men who are married to (or are at least the sons of) ordinary women.

Most real women, for example, want part-time work because it is compatible with the kind of domestic life they wish to maintain. But female Labour activists have fought to give part-time workers the same employment rights as full-time ones, which would mean that part-time employment would largely disappear. Thus do Labour women put the traditional trades union protectionism of their party above the needs of real women. Just as many female Tory MPs elevate their own prejudices above the desire of most women for progressive abortion laws. A woman politician will always be a politician first and a woman second. Which is precisely what will put her hopelessly out of touch with others of her sex.

Denying the gods of risk

Football violence is as old as the game and may even be part of its attraction

In the good old days, the Irish police would have gone in to the Lansdowne Road terrace, dragged out the thugs, beaten them up, and the England-Ireland football match would have continued half an hour later. Not today. Instead we pay the thugs the honour they most crave. We call them political. We splash their faces across television. We summon political correspondents from their beds and ministers from their banquets. They all come running — at the beck and call of 50 hoodlums.

Within hours of the incident in Dublin on Wednesday night I counted no fewer than four ministers on both sides of the water plunging into the melee. An ashen British Home Secretary looked as if he was reacting to the outbreak of World War Three. He did not even deny a ludicrous BBC question implying that the incident was in some way his responsibility. I suppose if you go on television, you take responsibility ipso facto. Both John Major and Tony Blair offered the thugs their pennyworth of glory on the Thursday. I imagine a PhD thesis or two is already under way, not to mention an inquiry by a committee chaired by Gerald Kaufman. Then the BBC can screen the film of the book of the riot.

The only statesmanlike remarks this week came from the football officials, British and Irish. They said that these things happen in every football country; there was not a lot to do to stop it; it was said the game had to be abandoned; the troublemakers were a minority; no, it should not affect next year's European championship finals in Britain. All that might alter that was if the media generated enough hysteria, which is what the media proceeded to do. We load the gang members with menace, publicise their names, disseminate their views and turn them into local heroes.

There is no way of eliminating the risk of trouble at football grounds. They are not churches. People go to the football grounds to honour the gods of risk: the risk of one's own team getting beaten is what gives exhilaration to victory. The thrill of a crowd in the mass includes the frisson of fear when it is disappointed. "Trouble at football match" is the oldest evening paper headline in the book, like "fight outside pub". Early



England fans in full cry: everyone who goes to a match knows there is a chance of trouble — but we all need some risk in our lives

football violence normally took the form of trying to kill the referee. In 1921 a Bradford ground had to be closed for its persistent violence. In the 1920s Arsenal and Spurs fans met in the streets of Highbury with knives and iron bars. Police batons charges on crowds were commonplace. One club took the view that a match should not be stopped unless the bodies being thrown were full rather than just empties. In the 1930s, pitch

happened is that the disturbances have simply been transferred from the grounds to the streets and pubs outside, where they continue as before. The tribe will have its form of fun. I doubt whether local residents are delighted.

Next week the risk expert, John Adams of London University, comes up with another of his counter-intuitive squibs on this subject. Adams's original research was in the mundane field of seat belt and motorcycle helmet law. He questioned the figures that proved that seat belts and crash helmets reduced accidents. His answer was that they did not. They saved the lives of bad drivers. By encouraging everyone to go faster and drive more wildly they killed more other road users, such as backseat passengers, pedestrians and cyclists. One test of this (which I recommend) is to get into a motorway fast lane at 75 mph and undo your seatbelt. You instantly feel unsafe and reduce your speed. Among countries that have compulsory seat belt laws, only Britain appears to have experienced a small decline in road deaths as a result, and that could be attributed to better road design. Drivers have compensated for the reduced risk of a crash by driving faster.

The classic instance of risk compensation was the miners' Davy

safety lamp. The lamp cost more lives, because miners felt safer and went into more dangerous seams. Fatalities actually rose after the lamp's introduction. Adams's most recent work is on crash helmets. A number of American states have now repealed compulsory helmet laws. The effect has been startling. Fatalities associated with motorcycles have fallen faster (or risen slower) in states without helmet laws than in those that have retained them. The reason appears to be the obvious one: those who do not wear helmets ride more cautiously and have fewer crashes. (One solution to the dispatch rider menace in London would be to ban them from wearing helmets.)

Adams believes that we have inside us a "risk thermostat" which we turn up or down at certain times of the day or year. We would not dream of using a London restaurant declared unsafe by government sanitary inspectors, yet we guzzle bacteria by the million in a Greek island taverna or Moroccan souk. We install ventilated lobbies to enjoy lavatory in Britain, for fear of nasty smells getting out. Yet we hire an unchecked car on the Costa del Sol, ski off-piste or go white-water rafting. We yolkwalk, take a brandy too many and eat fat-laden desserts. We are not mad, just instinctively seeking to restore some of the danger to our lives that government inspectors have all but eradicated. Like a climber nearing the summit, we turn the risk thermostat recklessly to danger.

By encouraging everyone to go faster and drive more wildly they killed more other road users, such as backseat passengers, pedestrians and cyclists. One test of this (which I recommend) is to get into a motorway fast lane at 75 mph and undo your seatbelt. You instantly feel unsafe and reduce your speed. Among countries that have compulsory seat belt laws, only Britain appears to have experienced a small decline in road deaths as a result, and that could be attributed to better road design. Drivers have compensated for the reduced risk of a crash by driving faster.

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Simon Jenkins

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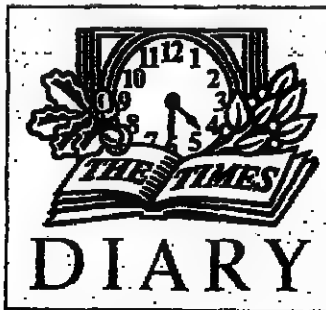
Clause wars

VIDEO WARS have broken out in Labour's ranks. Ken Loach, the film director and socialist, has made a 10-minute video to counter Tony Blair's commitment to the abolition of Clause Four.

Loach is the director behind films such as *Cathy Come Home* and *Kes*. His latest effort, *Clause Four*, the movie, will have its premiere in Westminster next week. Its contents remain secret but the video will be shown on Tuesday at a press conference chaired by Alan Simpson, Labour MP for Nottingham South, one of the most vociferous opponents of Blair's plans to scrap Clause Four.

Simpson was not available for comment yesterday but his office described the video as a "short 10-minute riposte to the official party line". It is also a counterblast to 6,000 copies of a video distributed some weeks ago by Labour's headquarters at Walworth Road. Tony Blair and John Prescott argued in the official version that Clause Four, which commits the Labour Party to public ownership, should go.

Ken Livingstone, MP for Brent



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Jeremy Paxman was not quite his unflappable self on Thursday night at an Oxford Union debate. Students teased the bossy question master of University Challenge by prefacing questions from the floor with "Your starter for ten". Paxman thanked his hosts for inviting him to speak. "An invitation I now somewhat regret."

Rhubarb

THERE WAS dismay among regulars at the *What The Papers Say* awards luncheon at the Savoy yesterday. For the first time in nearly 40 years there was no Lancashire hotpot. Instead a curious concoction called Hindle Wakes was served up. It consisted of corned beef of Goosnargh chicken with a extraordinary rhubarb and basil stuffing wrapped in bacon, and was declared "disgusting" by a good many guests.

Even more disconcerting was the speech by the National Heritage Secretary Stephen Dorrell. Reading from a script carefully drafted by a civil servant in his department, he said "this morning" three times. It was actually after 2pm.

A statement in French issued yesterday by the European Commis-

sion would have delighted Euro-sceptics. "The Georgian population, subject to extreme poverty since the collapse of the European Union..." said the announcement. It should have read the Soviet Union.

Trying again

AS ENGLAND and Wales step onto the hallowed turf at Cardiff Arms Park today, their Irish counterparts will be turning their minds to music. The Irish Rugby Football Union is searching for a new an-



them for its team. The union's current anthem, *Soldier's Song*, is the national anthem of the Irish Republic even though its team is selected from Northern Ireland as well as the republic. This has caused disquiet given the current delicate political situation.

The *Londonerry Air*, better known as *Danny Boy*, has been rejected as a substitute and the union has approached Phil Coulter, composer of those memorable 1960s hits *Puppet on a String* and *Congratulations*. A spokesman refused to give details of Coulter's commission other than to say it should be "catchy and Irish" and that it should be ready for the World Cup series at the end of May.

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On the scent

CANINE press hounds from Britain are covering the O.J. Simpson trial now that Kato, the Simpson family dog, has become a star witness.

Kato is a rare Japanese Akita, which looks like a wolf. The prosecution claims that he was barking manically on the night of the murders and that his behaviour could provide vital clues.

The Chicago-based *Dog World* has already sent a reporter and Si-



Don Touhig: a Spumante victory

mon Parsons, editor of the British magazine of the same name, has joined the hunt. "We are following the case now," he says.

Asti socialists

CHAMPAGNE socialism clearly hasn't reached the Welsh valleys yet. Celebrating his Islwyn victory on Thursday, Labour's Don Touhig reached for a bottle of bubbly and cracked it open. He chose not champagne, surprisingly, but an inferior tipple: Asti Spumante

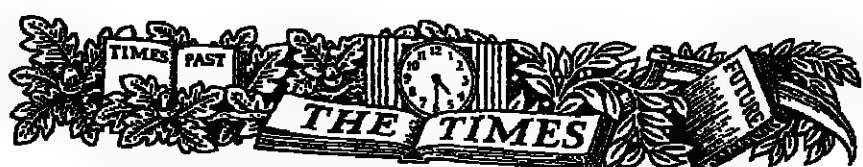
(around £5 from supermarkets), the sweet fizzy wine from Italy. Political observers believe Neil Kinnock, his predecessor at Islwyn, would have plumped for real champagne. Mary Spillane, an image consultant, suggests that Asti is a no-no. "Maybe he's trying to project a new image. A better alternative to Asti would have been Brecon Water. It's hard to remember the last time you met anyone who drank Asti Spumante."

P.H.S

THE CONQUE

A speck on the map

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POLITICAL UNION

Major is right to call for self-restraint over Europe

Rarely has Kenneth Clarke looked so lonely or exasperated as he did yesterday, seeking to deny allegations that a rift had opened between him and the Prime Minister over Europe. "We've run out of ways of making clear there aren't any divisions," the Chancellor of the Exchequer claimed, conveniently forgetting that on Thursday the Prime Minister resisted the temptation to "make clear" this alleged unity no fewer than three times.

When challenged then to give public backing to Mr Clarke's claim that a European single currency would pose no threat to the nation state, Mr Major repeatedly declined to do so. It later emerged that the Chancellor had been "consulted" by the Prime Minister over a letter to Gordon Brown, the shadow Chancellor, expressing their joint view that a single currency would indeed have constitutional implications. This claim marked a significant shift of ground since Mr Clarke's speech on the future of the EU to the European Movement last week, which drew a sharp distinction between monetary and political union. The Prime Minister's short speech to the Cabinet this week on the need for unity had evidently made its mark. Senior ministers seem to have resolved to keep their differences over Europe private — at least for now.

Mr Major's attempts to stamp his authority upon the Conservative Party have been repeated as often as they have been unsuccessful, especially over the future of Europe. It will be difficult for a Chancellor who is an enthusiastic supporter of further European integration to remain silent on the supposed attractions of a single currency, an issue which is at the heart of his responsibilities. Nonetheless, there are good reasons for the Prime Minister's current strategy.

The first is that he appears to have clarified his own thinking on the EU in the last year. Mr Major came to office promising to put Britain "at the heart of Europe". For more than three years, he tended to take his lead on European questions from

Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, rather than from the more sceptical members of the Cabinet. Since his speech in Leiden last September, however, a different emphasis has been apparent. In a television interview last month, he promised to resist any constitutional changes or attempts to impose a single currency at the forthcoming Inter-Governmental Conference. Ministers on the Euro-sceptic right have approved.

In making such a shift, the Prime Minister has moved closer to the prevailing view of Europe within the Conservative Party. The integrationist position supported by Mr Clarke has many influential champions within the party's elite, such as Michael Heseltine and Lord Howe. But Norman Lamont gave a more authentic account of Tory opinion in his Oxford speech yesterday. Britain's trade success and influence in the world is far less dependent upon EU membership than integrationists claim, the former Chancellor said. More radically, Mr Lamont argued that a moment of truth was now approaching for Britain when the nation must decide whether it wished to remain sovereign or "have more resemblance to the State of Delaware".

Mr Major would never use such bald language. But it is clear that he is beginning to perceive the imminence of this moment of truth. None of the options before him are free of hazard. If he allows his colleagues to speak their minds — and especially Mr Clarke — he risks irreparable party divisions. By demanding conformity to his own revised European policy, on the other hand, he may encourage defiance by senior members of the Government and ultimate humiliation. The latter course is far preferable, however. Better to demand Cabinet unity over a position which is likely to win support in the Tory party and among the electorate, than to allow integrationists and Euro-sceptics a degree of free rein which may easily descend into speculative anarchy. Mr Clarke stands rebuked; it remains to be seen how long he will keep the peace.

THE POUND IN YOUR POCKET

Britons worry too much about turmoil on the foreign exchanges

Over the years, the sterling crisis has become an enduring and treasured part of Britain's national heritage. We are all too liable to discern a "traditional sterling crisis" in every minor disturbance of the global foreign exchange market, such as the one that affected the pound, the dollar and the German mark this week.

Why Britain should feel so worried about the level of its national currency is not always clear. Despite the ravages of inflation since the 1960s, the pound has fared much better in the 20th century as a whole than other major currencies, apart from the dollar and Swiss franc. Yet we keep asking ourselves the same nagging question: if sterling falls against the mark or the dollar, does this mean that "pound in my pocket" is losing its value too?

When Harold Wilson told his television audience after the 1967 devaluation that "the pound in your pocket has not been devalued" he was ducking the truth. Ever since then, the people of Britain have associated falls in sterling with inflation, political crisis and falling living standards. The exchange-rate, however, is just a market price like any other. The impact of a devaluation depends entirely on the economic conditions and policies before and after it occurs.

When the pound fell sharply in 1981 and again in 1992, conditions were highly propitious and the effects of devaluation were almost entirely benign. Today, a further devaluation would be more problematic. Exporters and manufacturers are already operating near full capacity and are showing an unhealthy inclination to raise prices instead of expanding output.

A falling pound today might only encourage such inflationary behaviour, instead of supporting economic growth, as it

did two years ago. For this reason, the Government and the Bank of England would be right to worry about a serious fall in the pound, and might even be justified in raising interest rates if this would help to support it. Fortunately, however, the recent fall in the pound has not been very serious — and if it became serious an increase in interest rates would probably be unhelpful, since the main domestic cause of the pound's weakness has been worry about the Tories' tenuous hold on power.

Like any other market price, the sterling exchange-rate is influenced by a host of factors, some of them completely unrelated to conditions within Britain. For example, the main reason for this week's fall against the mark was the financial panic in Mexico, which sent some investors scuttling out of North America to the supposed safe-haven of Germany. These flows are likely to be reversed in the near future, as investors take a more sober view of the Mexican crisis and recognise that the US dollar should, if anything, benefit from the outflow of footloose international money from Mexico and other risky emerging markets around the world. Germany, too, may look less attractive as the mark becomes over-valued and relations between German employers, trade unions, politicians and central bankers deteriorate.

Whether stability returns to the foreign exchanges next week, next month or the month after, the Treasury and the Bank would do well to stick to the abstinent new policy on sterling they have defined in the past two years. The exchange rate can never be ignored entirely, but a fall in the pound should only be resisted if it is clearly threatening to aggravate inflation. Even then, action to support the currency should only be undertaken if it is likely to work.

THE CONQUERING SARKEESE

A speck on the map wants to remain a speck

Were the Ealing studios not now dead, "Passport to Sark" would be a film to savor rapture in the heart of even the most despondent patriot. The itty-bitty Channel island David, with only 560 residents for the local *vingtenier* (or under-constable) to watch over, has voted to spurn the Maas-tricht treaty in an endearing gesture of defiance. The island spirit lives on in Sark.

Sark, fairer than aught in the world that the lit skies cover
Laughs inly behind her cliffs, and the seafarers mark
As a shrine where the sunlight serves,
though the brown clouds hover.

Sark... The plumpness of these lines by Swinburne may prove difficult to digest for those of meagre sentiment; but for the Sarkeese they bear a well-honed verity. The island is truly a shrine to values which were elsewhere on the verge of extinction even before the rude irruption into Europe of Maas-tricht. There is on Sark neither income tax nor bureau-
crats; nor even — *mon dieu!* — motor cars.

The island's resistance to a prospective flood of new European regulations and directives evokes memories of Sybil Hathaway, the doughty Dame of Sark in the five warlike years of German occupation.

"What was good enough for William the Conqueror," she is reported to have intoned to the German Commandant of the Channel Islands, "is good enough for the yeomen of my island." Sark was then, as it still remains, a feudal place. The German officers there, in awkward tribute to her grandness, in that little place, clicked their heels to her on their visits to the *seigneurie*. The present Seigneur of Sark — the grandson of Dame Sybil — demands deference of a comparable order from the faceless Maas-tricht-men in Brussels. And why should he not?

Michael Beaumont, who used to be an aeronautical engineer in Bristol before his feudal engagements beckoned him to the island of his forebears, takes most seriously his trustee's role. Jacques Santer, the President of the European Commission, has never ventured to Sark. And few of the Sarkeese are thought ever to have visited Brussels. Sark may have neither metalled roads nor the National Health Service. It may even (as Philip Stokes, a Deputy of the People in the Sark Chief Pleas, wrote yesterday in *The Times*) have no constitutional lawyers. Yet it does have a will to live in the manner of an island. What was good enough for William the Conqueror is still good enough for Sark.

Bombing civilians as a weapon of modern warfare

From Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon, Chief of the Air Staff

Sir, There is undoubtedly a serious debate to be had about the place of offensive air power in modern warfare. Sadly Simon Jenkins ("Ban airborne terrorism", February 15) has missed the opportunity to contribute to this.

With the benefit of hindsight, few airmen would dispute the concerns raised over the timing and the need for the bombing raids on Dresden in February 1945, though this is to presume the luxury of freedom from the still acute pressures at the time to secure victory and with it a minimum of additional casualties.

No serious military analyst, however, would deny the enormous contribution made by offensive air power in World War II to accelerating the defeat of an abhorrent regime. This was true particularly in the attrition of ground forces (as in the Falaise pocket in 1944) but also in the destruction of strategic targets such as U-boat pens. That targets were not always well chosen and that disproportionate civilian casualties sometimes resulted does not discredit air power *per se*.

Nor is air power fundamentally different from other arms of warfare in this respect. The value of submarines to a country's defence is not disproved because of their indiscriminate use against merchantmen and cruise liners. And the casualties inflicted by mortar, artillery or tank in Leningrad during World War II, or Groy more recently, are no less horrific than the destruction wrought by allied air forces over the Rhine some 50 years ago. Indeed it is of note that the appalling civilian casualties in Bosnia have occurred when the air forces of Nato have almost entirely excluded Bosnian-Serb offensive aircraft.

But the analysis is more fatally flawed. The days are gone when bombing was inevitably somewhat haphazard. Technology now offers a level of precision that allows minimal

collateral damage. This, contrary to Mr Jenkins's assertion, was the position in the Gulf conflict in 1991. Such evidence as Iraq has made available points to mercifully few civilian casualties and the most heavily publicised of those appear to have been caused by a cynical decision to collocate an air raid shelter with a military command centre.

In the wrong hands any weapon can bring a mindless result — even the pen.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL GRAYDON,
Ministry of Defence,
Main Building, Whitehall, SW1,
February 16.

From Mr Bruce Kent

Sir, Simon Jenkins has raised pressing questions about war, law and morality. Over fifty years ago they were raised by Professor A. L. Goodhart, Oxford Professor of Jurisprudence, in a 1940 pamphlet entitled "What Acts of War are Justifiable?" Copies were issued to the RAF.

It is stressed that the separation of armies and peaceful inhabitants into two distinct classes is perhaps the greatest triumph of international law. He concluded his essay: "It is to re-establish [the laws of war] in a world threatened with barbarism that this war is being fought."

Then followed Coventry, Dresden and Hiroshima and in a direct line Bosnia and Chechnya.

Is it not time for the establishment, as part of the International Court of Justice, of a permanent court with criminal jurisdiction and the right to apply the laws of war to states as well as to individuals?

Yours faithfully,
BRUCE KENT
(Vice-President),
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament,
162 Holloway Road, N7,
February 15.

From Lord Denman

Sir, Many of us who served in and survived the 1939-45 conflict will be grateful to the Bishop of Coventry for the wise sentiments expressed in his article (February 14) and for the words he chose to use in Dresden the previous day.

The end of hostilities in 1945 will be marked in many ways in the weeks ahead. May I ask the Bishop and those chosen to make public statements not to forget other non-combatants who lost their lives in the tragedy, especially the 30,000 in London's Blitz and the 200,000 in the battle for Manila. There are many, especially Filipinos, with us today who will appreciate our concern for their losses of 50 years ago.

Yours faithfully,
DENMAN,
House of Lords,
February 15.

From Mr W. B. H. Ashton

Sir, I have watched with interest and disbelief the way in which some politicians and media have skirted around the morality of the bombing of Dresden.

Of course it was a crime. Of course we should apologise. The horrors carried out by the Nazis in no way justify our own appalling actions at that time.

Yours sincerely,
W. B. H. ASHTON,
20 Laleham Road,
Shepperton, Middlesex.

From Mr David Ellen

Sir, Will there be a service commemorating the thousands of civilians killed by Hitler's V1s and V2s in 1944-45?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID ELLEN,
126 Newstead Avenue,
Orpington, Kent,
February 15.

Archbishop's plea on tax benefits for married couples

From Mrs Frances Savin

Sir, The Archbishop of York is right to draw attention to the progressive worsening of fiscal support for the conventionally married (report, February 14).

This is of particular concern to single-earning families with children. Generally those mothers who choose to remain in the home with their children, although under constant pressure to return to paid work, suffer considerable financial sacrifice. They lose their salary and consequently their personal tax allowance.

Our organisation advocates the transferability of the personal allowance to the earning partner. This would help all conventional single-income families, and it would help to alleviate the effects of the poverty/marriage trap.

Janet Daley, in her succinctly hard-hitting article of January 5, told us that a married father of two children earning £160 pw keeps £33 less than a single mother who earns £80. Why should she marry?

Your report quotes remarks by Denise Knowles, of Relate, the former Marriage Guidance Council, about love and relationships. There's nothing wrong with that; but something resembling equality in tax treatment would also help.

Yours faithfully,
FRANCES SAVIN (Chairman),
Full Time Mothers,
PO Box 186, London SW3 5RF.

From the Director of Family & Youth Concern

Sir, I welcome the Archbishop's call for greater recognition within the fiscal system of the married state, upon which family stability and thus the future of our society crucially depend.

This could be achieved either by restoring the married couple's allowance

to its full value and then indexing it along with personal allowances or by raising personal allowances to absorb it and then permitting one partner in the marriage to transfer any unused part of his/her personal allowance to the other.

The latter measure was advocated in the Government's Green Paper of 1986, *The Reform of Personal Taxation*, which recognised that at different times and for different reasons one partner to a marriage may be dependent on the other.

Yours sincerely,
VALERIE RICHES, Director,
Family & Youth Concern,
322 Woodstock Road, Oxford,
February 16.

From Mr Gary Simister

Sir, Perhaps the Archbishop of York would spare a charitable thought for the vast numbers of single people in the UK, when he proposes tax breaks for traditionally married couples. As a single person I already pay tax to support traditional families who bear children and claim child benefit, together with the vast resources needed for their educational and, if necessary, social security needs.

Perhaps the Archbishop should concentrate on the moral responsibilities of marriage and leave taxation policy to the experts at HM Treasury.

Yours sincerely,
GARY SIMISTER,
132 Narbonne Avenue, SW4,
February 14.

From Mrs J. H. Millar

Sir, I am delighted that the Church, in the person of Dr Habgood has, at last, come forward to support the principle that married couples should pay less tax than two single people living together. The whole fabric of a

stable society should be built on the unity of the home of a married couple. It is just not good enough for an unmarried couple to bring children into the world without the responsibility of a serious commitment beforehand.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
JOANNA MILLAR,
7 Avenue de Grande Bretagne,
Monte Carlo.

From Mr Richard Clements

Sir, I agree with Denise Knowles, of Relate, that a marriage is the responsibility of the couple, not the Government. However, the Archbishop may yet have a point.

If the Treasury claims that it is interested in the producing of a fair tax system it may wish to note that when I married a student last April, and gained a married man's allowance, my wife, in gaining married status, simultaneously lost 12 per cent of her grant.

The economics of marriage under these circumstances is not sound. Unwittingly perhaps, the Chancellor and Secretary of State for Education have created a fiscal anomaly that imposes a penalty on devotion and commitment.

Fortunately, I am sufficiently advantaged not to have let the Government affect my dreams. On St Valentine's day may I proudly boast that I married for love rather than money and that should the Chancellor wish to test my commitment with a levy on love I would happily pay.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD CLEMENTS,
6 Acorn Lodge, 21 Fulready Road, E10,
February 14.

Weekend Money letters, page 39

Opera row

From the General Director,
English National Opera

Sir, I construe Melvyn Bragg's article of February 10, "Stop sniping at the Coliseum", rather differently from Dennis Stevenson and his *Lytic Theatre* Review colleagues (letters, February 15, 17; leading article, February 17). I would have thought that in saying the team "appears to be fixing it so that ENO is... undervalued", Melvyn was describing the likely effect of the publication of the review rather than any intention to damage ENO.

I can vouch for the deep concern both within the company and among our many supporters over lines in the review such as "a reduced role for ENO". Melvyn is only one of many who have come forward since the review was published to proclaim that they regard the people's opera house as an irreplaceable and essential part of British artistic life.

I respect the talents of the review team and am delighted that they make their support of ENO so clear in their letter — clearer than in their document. If last Friday's article has given a cue for this declaration, then it is anything but damaging to ENO.

Yours sincerely,
DENNIS MARKS,
General Director,
English National Opera,
London Coliseum,
St Martin's Lane, WC2,
February 15.

School merger

From Mrs Susannah Chapman

Sir, As the Headmistress of Charters Ancaster School, when the Girls Public Day School Trust took it over in 1988, I write to express my distress at the recent turn of events (report, February 13).

I can understand the advantages of a merger of Charters Ancaster School with Battle Abbey; the increased numbers make a stronger more viable school. I cannot understand why the GPDSST can organise such a merger without transferring all the assets it acquired, when it took over the running of the school in 1988, to the new school.

Knowing the excellent reputation of the GPDSST, the governing body in 1988 had no hesitation in accepting the

transfer of Charters Ancaster to the trust. At that time the school was cash rich, with probably over a million pounds of surplus funds, since it had just completed a successful merger and sold one school site for building.

Seven years later, the trust appears to be discarding its liabilities — staff and pupils — while retaining the school's assets — land and buildings. Is this fair? It makes me think of a foster mother, who finds she has taken on responsibility for a child she cannot really cope with, so she passes her on to someone else, but keeps her clothes and belongings.

Yours faithfully,
SUSANNAH CHAPMAN
(Headmistress of Charters Ancaster School, 1985-89),
Dove House, Sutton, Suffolk,
February 13.

Must try harder

From Mrs Joyce Ransford

Sir, Seventy years ago I did another girl's science homework for her as well as my own (letters, February 9, 13). Hers had higher marks than mine.

It's being unable to complain that makes it so irksome.

Yours sincerely,
JOYCE RANSFORD,
Hillside House, Little Rissington,
Nr Bourton-on-the-Water,
Gloucestershire.

Lottery winnings

From Mr Andrew Bradford

Sir, The last time my wife won anything (letter, February 15) it was a £50 Premium Bond prize. She promptly spent £500 of her winnings.

The prospect of her winning the National Lottery jackpot fills me with dread.

Yours sincerely,
ANDREW BRADFORD,
Kincardine, Kincardine O'Neil,
Aboynne, Aberdeenshire,
February 15.

Rival discoverers of the Nile source

From Mr Guy H. Yeoman, FRGS

Sir, You report (February 11) that the Friends of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens are to dedicate a plaque on the memorial to John Hanning Speke acknowledging him as one of several claimants to the discovery of the source of the Nile. I fear their proposed wording will only add to the confusion.

After their discovery of Lake Tanganyika in 1858, while at Kazeh (modern Tabora) on their return journey, Richard Burton was pressed by Speke to accompany him on a visit to the rumoured great *nyanza* to the north. Burton refused, but agreed that Speke should go ("to get rid of him", in his subsequent snide words). When Speke returned announcing his discovery, he again pressed Burton to join him on a second visit. Burton contemptuously refused, thereby renouncing any right to association in the discovery, leaving it to James Grant to accompany Speke on his second, successful, expedition.

Speke reached England before Burton and ungraciously broke his promise not to address the Royal Geographical Society in the latter's absence. But it is absurd to say he did so "without emphasising too strongly that he had been a member of Burton's expedition". His audience knew perfectly well that it had been a RGS-sponsored expedition and Speke made it clear that Burton was his leader.

Burton in due course fatally compounded his mistake in not visiting the lake by obsessively promoting his Tanganyika as the Nile source. It was left to Stanley in 1875, by his masterly circumnavigation of Lake Victoria, to prove Speke right. In fact, Burton never set foot within the central African basin of the Nile, while Grant scarcely saw the lake and never visited the source.

If the Friends will go to Mwanza on the south shore of the lake, or to the Ripon Falls at the north, they will find plaques that unequivocally credit Speke, without mentioning Burton. The date on any new plaque should of course be 1858 — not 1857 as in your report.

Yours faithfully,
GUY YEOMAN,
Crowden Lea,
Upper Booth, Edale, Derbyshire,
February 11.

From Mr Patrick Talbot

Sir, Speke and Grant had already walked the huge distance from the coast around the west side of Lake Victoria before they found the Nile's source. Jubilant and exhausted they made the journey down river to Cairo as far as possible by boat, not on foot, as your report suggested.

The full cable sent by the party in 1863, gives its exact location upstream of Khartoum, on the White Nile: "Inform Sir Roderick Murchison that all is well, that we are in latitude 14°30' upon the Nile, and that the Nile is settled" (quoted in *The White Nile* by Alan Moorehead (1960)).

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK TALBOT,
Hampton School,
Geography Department,
Hamworth Road,
Hampton, Middlesex.

From Mr M. S. Taylor

Sir, John Hanning Speke's companion and "rival" Sir Richard Burton is buried in a most unusual tomb in the churchyard of St Mary Magdalene's Church in Mortlake. Unfortunately the large stone tent-like canopy which forms the tomb is decaying through neglect.

Might some of the attention being given to Speke be shared with Burton, without whom Speke's explorations might have been less successful?

Yours faithfully,
M. S. TAYLOR,
18a Warwick Road, W5,
February 13.

Football hooligans

From the Deputy Chairman
of the Conservative Party

Sir, The fact that those who plan premeditated football violence have to go abroad for their activities strengthens, rather than weakens, the arguments for holding the European Championships in this country in 1996 (reports, February 16, 17; letters, February 17).

Recent experience suggests that British police and football authorities have a strong grasp of the problem of travelling football thugs — one can only imagine how much worse the problem might become without passport controls.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL DOBBS,
Deputy Chairman,
Conservative and Unionist Party,
32 Smith Square, SW1,
February 16.

Border-crossing

From Mr Richard Vivian

Sir, Should we now be referring to the new President of the European Commission as Jacques Sans Frontières?

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD VIVIAN,
Flat 3, 37 Dafforne Road, SW17.

Letters for publication may
be faxed to 0171-782 5046.

GOLD
London close.... **\$378.25** (\$377.00)
* denotes midday trading price



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Our City Editor on Glaxo's £9bn bid battle



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Partners in Power at Umist



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England ranks look to Rodber for Cardiff inspiration

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 18 1995

Trafalgar attacks incentive package

Northern fights bid by luring investors

BY MARTIN WALLER AND PHILIP BASSETT

IN AN all-out attempt to avoid a £1.2 billion hostile takeover by Trafalgar House, Northern Electric has offered a package of incentives worth more than £5 a share to its shareholders in an attempt to keep their loyalty.

The news sent Northern's share price, already well ahead of the £10.48 cash terms on offer, higher again and prompted similar rises in the value of the other regional electricity companies.

Northern ended 21p higher at £11.12p. Other bid candidates in the sector also rose. Manweb, serving north Wales and the northwest, was up 18p to 85p, and South Wales was ahead by 28p to 88p.

The political outcry over the bid, which offers Trafalgar significant tax incentives, rumbled on after the Government's widely-criticised decision earlier this week not to refer it to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

The Government's "negligence" over the bid would cost the taxpayer up to £270 million, Gordon Brown, the shadow Chancellor, claimed yesterday. Labour has renewed calls for a full MMC investigation of the planned takeover.

Jack Cunningham, the shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, will on Monday lead a Labour debate in the Commons on the Government's alleged failure to act over Trafalgar's bid.

Mr Brown said yesterday that the Government's decision would leave other privatised utilities open to takeover. He specifically mentioned Yorkshire Electricity as "vulnerable" to a takeover by Hanson. "Government negli-

gence is costing the taxpayer millions," he added.

Speaking in Newcastle upon Tyne, Northern's home base, Mr Brown said that £223 million would be lost to the Treasury because if Trafalgar succeeded, it would use Northern's profits, and therefore its tax liabilities, to relieve the company of surplus Advanced Corporation Tax. A further £50 million would be lost by Trafalgar sheltering the gain which Northern receives from this summer's flotation of the National Grid.

Northern shareholders will vote on the incentives package after the bid timetable has run its course. The company has buttressed its defence with hefty profits and dividends forecasts for coming years. David Morris, the Northern chairman, told shareholders:

"You would be giving up significant value by accepting the Trafalgar House offer. A continuing investment in Northern would be worth significantly more."

The incentives package comes in three parts:

□ A special one-off dividend of £1.50 per share, costing Northern £167 million outright and as much as £42 million in addition to Advanced Corporation Tax.

□ The issue of £111 million worth of irredeemable new preference shares, worth on issue at least £1 for every Northern share. Or shareholders can accept a cash alternative.

□ A forecast that Northern's 6.5 per cent holding in the National Grid, which connects the power generators to the regional distributors, will be handed over direct to shareholders. Northern says its share, on the basis of City forecasts of the Grid's worth, will be equivalent to a further £2.57 per share.

In addition the company is forecasting a 16 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to at least £150 million in the current year, to March 31, and earnings per share 21 per cent ahead at 97p. Total dividends of 33p would represent an increase of a third, and dividends for the next two years will be raised by another 13 per cent each year.

The package was immediately attacked by Trafalgar. "It's all done with mirrors," said Nigel Rich, the chief executive. Simon Keswick, the chairman, added: "All the Northern board's smokescreen about regionalism and Trafalgar's suitability to own an electricity company has evaporated into a plea for a higher bid, combined with a scheme to strip the company of its cash."

Tempus, page 28



On the up: David Morris, chairman of Northern Electric. Northern shares rose 21p.

Trust wins court approval for Wellcome stake sale

BY SARAH BAGNALL

THE High Court yesterday ruled that the Wellcome Trust can sell its 39.5 per cent holding in Wellcome, a move welcomed by all three sides.

Wellcome, which is fending off a hostile £9.2 billion bid from Glaxo, secured an extra eight days to the bid timetable, increasing the time it has available to find a white knight to top Glaxo's offer. The latest date that the trust's acceptance of Glaxo's £10.25 a share offer must be submitted has been extended from February 28 to March 8.

The trust had irrevocably accepted Glaxo's offer but, after representations from Wellcome, the court agreed that the trust would be able to withdraw this commitment if a higher offer materialised. It can be terminated if the higher offer is announced before Glaxo's offer becomes wholly unconditional.

John Robb, chairman and

chief executive of Wellcome, said: "The ruling is great encouragement to our efforts to achieve a better offer for all our shareholders and gives us more time in which to do so."

The Glaxo camp also welcomed the court's decision, without which its offer could not proceed. Sir Richard Sykes,



Sir Richard: pleased

chief executive, said: "We are pleased that the High Court has made an order enabling the Wellcome Trust to sell its Wellcome shares. We look forward to receiving the Wellcome Trust's acceptance in respect of its entire holding on or before the initial closing date of March 8."

Glaxo's shares remained unchanged at 641p while Wellcome's shares firmed 5p to £10.28, 5p above the current value of Glaxo's offer. The rise above the offer price suggests market hopes that the company might find a white knight are growing.

The court previously approved two share sales by the trust, which has reduced its holding from 100 per cent since 1986. Approval was needed because the sale of the balance of the trust's holding represents a change in policy.

Melvyn Marckus, page 26

Tibet hotels soar to dizzy heights

BY COLIN NARBROUGH
WORLD TRADE CORRESPONDENT

TIBET, roof of the world, has embraced the terrestrial market with the debut of Tibet Pearl Star, its first listed company, on the Shanghai stock exchange.

The exchange yesterday saw the Tibetan hotel company soar 70 per cent from its issue price on its first day of trading.

The frantic cries of dealers were a far cry from the traditional Tibetan world of buddhist monks, prayer wheels, rancid butter and yak's milk. Tibet Pearl is clearly a company intent on being part of the modern business world.

The company listed 27 million "A"

shares, which are restricted to domestic investors. The shares opened at \$5 yuan (42p) each, a premium of 2 yuan (15p) to the issue price, and ended the first day at almost 6 yuan (46p), despite an overall fall in the market.

Although China's communist administration has not given direct tax incentives to Tibet Pearl, Peking is giving strong backing to Tibetan companies to foster businesses among ethnic minorities. But only 10 per cent of the issue went to native Tibetans, which is hardly likely to help to suppress resistance to Chinese rule.

Since China occupied Tibet in 1959, forcing the Dalai Lama, the country's religious leader to flee the country, Peking has been attacked for promoting

Chinese migration that threatens to swamp Tibet's indigenous people.

The initial public offering of Tibet Pearl last month brought a flood of investors to Lhasa, the Tibetan capital, some having to carry oxygen, as well as cash, to cope with the altitude. The offer attracted 2 billion yuan.

From its humble beginnings as a Tibetan restaurant in China's Sichuan province, Tibet Pearl has expanded into a 48 million yuan business with 10 hotels in Tibet, but the jewel in its corporate crown is a highly profitable three-star hotel in Chengdu, the flourishing capital of Sichuan, that is an almost compulsory stopover for travellers on their way from China to Tibet.

Mexican crisis scuttles dollar

BY JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE DOLLAR dropped to its lowest level against the mark since October 1992 because of the Mexican crisis, before recovering slightly on unconfirmed talk of intervention by the American Federal Reserve.

Fed intervention was suspected after the Bank of Japan surprised the markets by buying dollars against the yen early in European trading. Despite this, the dollar fell to within one yen of its post-war low against the Japanese currency.

Later, the central banks of Italy and Portugal intervened in favour of their currencies against the mark, which has been strengthening across a broad front all week. Sterling ended the week on a more stable note, its trade weighted index closing unchanged from Thursday at 87.1, but analysts continued to predict that the pound will be weighed down by political turmoil in the Conservative Party.

The mark has gained about 2 per cent against the lira and sterling in the past six trading sessions and around 4 per cent against the US currency. Yesterday's late rebound in the dollar, while intervention was suspected by some, was probably tied more to renewed hopes that a rescue package for Mexico will come to fruition. The peso rebounded yesterday on this speculation.

The dollar also gained some ground after figures showed that the US trade deficit had improved in December, falling to \$7.34 billion from \$10.04 billion in November. This was more positive news but set against it was the fact that the deficit soared by more than 40 per cent during 1994 as a whole.

The strength of the mark comes even before Germany follows moves to raise interest rates in the rest of the world and partly reflects political and economic problems in alternative investment currencies.

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BUSINESS TODAY

FT-SE 100	3044.2	(-8.9)
Yield	4.11%	(-2.58)
FT-SE A All share	1506.30	(-2.58)
Nikkei	18020.51	(-239.92)
Dow Jones	2975.07	(-12.45)
S&P Composite	463.63	(-1.39)

3-mth Interbank	6.4%	(6.4%)
Libor long gilt	10.1%	(10.1%)
Future (May)	10.1%	(10.1%)

3-mth Interbank	6.4%	(6.4%)
Libor long gilt	10.1%	(10.1%)
Future (May)	10.1%	(10.1%)

New York	1.5787	(1.5785)
London	1.5763	(1.5765)
DM	2.3435	(2.3434)
FF	8.1570	(8.1570)
SFR	1.3954	(1.3952)
Yen	153.06	(153.01)
S Index	67.1	(67.1)

London	1.4880	(1.4880)
DM	5.7700	(5.7700)
SFR	1.2588	(1.2588)
Yen	97.47	(97.47)
S Index	61.5	(61.5)

Tokyo close Yen	97.84	(97.84)
Brnt 15-day (Apr)	\$17.00	(\$16.90)
London close	\$378.25	(\$377.05)

* denotes midday trading price

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Glaxo still ahead in the Wellcome stakes

Judging from Glaxo's little tilt at Wellcome, industrialists brought up in the straitened culture of organic growth can undergo fearsome transformations given a breath of rarefied air from the summit of Mount Acquisition.

Glaxo, as Wellcome's defence document points out, has not made a significant acquisition since 1978. So be it. To liken Sir Richard Sykes, Glaxo's chief executive, to a man of the cloth stooping to the temptations of a red light district may over-daub the scenario but it serves to illustrate the irony of the affair.

Put another way, perennial habitués of the red light district, where purchases of one sort or another are a way of life, can learn a thing or two from the way in which Glaxo has embarked on the UK's largest ever takeover sortie.

How refreshing to see a £9 billion takeover bid described as a "final" offer from the outset, albeit subject to the appearance of a counter bidder. In the event, Glaxo's share and cash terms, unveiled last month, valued Wellcome's shares at £10.25.

This represented a premium of close on 50 per cent above the prevailing 68p and signalled an exit p/e ratio of a shade over 23 on historic earnings. This was cut to nearer 19 in the wake of Wellcome's 19 per cent rise in 1994 pre-tax profits to £738 million. Neither the huffing and puffing of John Robb, chairman and chief executive of Wellcome, nor a similar expenditure of hot air from advisers Barings and Morgan Stanley, has shaken the market's perception that the terms are certainly "fair" and arguably "full".

Congratulations, incidentally, to Dr Jonathan Gelles, an analyst at Wertheim Schroder, Schroders' Wall Street associate. Last July, he opined that Wellcome might well prove a takeover candidate; a prediction highlighted in our *Pennington* column. With the share price languishing not far north of £6, Gelles forecast that Wellcome could attract an offer in the region of £9. Gelles is not only perspicacious but also conservative.

Robb, clearly of a less conserva-

tive disposition, insisted that Glaxo's terms were "inadequate" and chose to jettison, far and wide, in search of a drug company that had the wit to appreciate that Gelles, Sykes, the Wellcome Trust (with a key 39.5 per cent stake) and the stock market had all got it wrong.

No easy task but a chairman, particularly one who is also a chief executive, presumably knows best. Fiduciary duties can be interpreted in all sorts of ways but the City, most certainly, was not going to fault Robb for attempting to obtain a higher price for shareholders. Word has it that, before Glaxo unveiled its inadequate £9 billion offer, Johnson & Johnson, the US healthcare combine, had flirted with Wellcome. Bearing this in mind, the chances are that Johnson & Johnson appeared high on Robb's list of transatlantic courtesies. Alas, Johnson & Johnson is not an aggressive concern, as befits an enterprise best known for a powder associated with baby's bottoms. Talc, by all accounts, is in merger talks with Wellcome appear-



MELVYN MARCKUS

to be out. Sandoz, the Swiss combine, has publicly proclaimed that it is not a contender for Wellcome. In all probability, Robb has also sounded out the likes of Merck and Pfizer in the US and conceivably Roche (currently absorbing Syntex) in Switzerland.

So far, there has been no stampede to top Glaxo's terms and time, for Wellcome's "any bidder but Glaxo" strategy, is clearly running

out. Yesterday brought news that the High Court has duly given Wellcome the go-ahead to pledge its trust irrevocably. This little ceremony is scheduled to take place on March 8, the first closing date of the bid, unless a third party raises the ante.

Such news — much as expected — comes hard on the heels of Thursday's report by Citywatch, an investment research organisation, that most of Wellcome's major institutional shareholders are prepared to fall in line behind Wellcome Trust and accept Glaxo's terms. Some ten institutions, led by the Pru (4.06 per cent) and Schroder Investment Management (3.12 per cent), hold a little over 30 per cent of Wellcome's equity. Acceptances of just 10.6 per cent will suffice for Glaxo to clinch control. That said, Glaxo's camp is leaving little to chance. Sykes and his colleagues embarked on a takeover roadshow yesterday; an act that will be performed before some 25 City institutions.

Wellcome's share price, at £10.28,

achieved a modest premium against Glaxo's terms yesterday although, if one juggles with dividend considerations, it can be argued that Glaxo's terms are worth £10.35. All the same, fund managers and analysts alike appear to have accepted Sykes's argument that consolidation in the quest for global market share and greater efficiency, is inevitable. Glaxo Wellcome would emerge as the largest drug company in the world with pharmaceutical sales in the region of £8.25 billion — some 40 per cent ahead of Merck. Even then, Glaxo Wellcome's share of the world market would be little more than 5.3 per cent compared with Sykes's publicly declared target of 10 per cent.

Takeover power plays hold a strange fascination, the quaintest aspect of the Glaxo/Wellcome battle being Robb's apparent refusal to hold discussions with Sykes. Searching for companies that perceive Wellcome as a "steal" must, inevitably, have taken up a little time. That said, it must be exceed-

ingly difficult for a casual observer to understand why, when one company bids £9 billion for another, the chairman and chief executive of the latter cannot find the time, or the inclination, to discuss the matter with the bidder.

Robb clearly takes the view that the Wellcome Trust has pulled the rug of independence from under Wellcome's feet. So, to all intents and purposes, it has. But, then again, did Robb's camp ensure that proper bridges were built between Wellcome and its major shareholder? Why did Sir Roger Gibbs, chairman of the Wellcome Trust, not sit on Wellcome's board?

In the wake of the court ruling, Glaxo is clearly favourite to succeed. That said, Sykes is understood to have held talks with Zeneca prior to launching the bid for Glaxo: talks that are said to have focused the minds at Zeneca wonderfully. Zeneca would be my outsider to attempt a counter — all things being equal which, thanks to Sykes's poker game with Wellcome Trust, they are not.

Ammunition firms' merger not seen as security threat

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Government is willing to approve a merger of the biggest ammunition companies in Britain and France. In spite of difficulties over obtaining shells from Belgium, a Nato ally, during the Gulf War, the Government has concluded that such a move poses no substantial threat to national security.

Year-long talks between British Aerospace and Giat, the French state arms company, about merging ammunition manufacture, are approaching a critical phase. Combining BAE's Royal Ordnance subsidiary, which has 5,500 employees, with Giat's ammunition arm, which has 3,000 workers, would enable rationalisation to rebuild both parties' profitability.

In his speech introducing Thursday's Navy debate Roger Freeman, the Minister of State for Procurement, said a deal could be agreed without

any danger to British arms supplies.

Although details of the proposals had yet to emerge, "in principle, we would not see production sharing in an Anglo-French industrial collaboration as fundamentally threatening to our security of supply," he told MPs.

Mr Freeman's highlighting of the discussions has raised expectations of a deal. A BAE spokesman said: "Progress is undoubtedly being made."

However, final agreement may have to await the outcome of the French presidential election in May. Giat has accumulated losses of Fr3.4 billion (£416 million) and its president, Pierre Chiquet, is understood to be pressing for the state to inject Fr3 billion (£367 million) through a recapitalisation to pave the way for a deal and the subsequent rationalisations.

Giat is best known for its

Leclerc tank, chosen ahead of Vickers' Challenger 2 last year by the United Arab Emirates in a £2.4 billion deal. It also makes artillery and small arms and already collaborates with BAE on several weapons programmes.

A joint venture between the two companies would be expected to strengthen substantially the competitiveness of Europe's two biggest ammunition makers and set the scene for further collaboration on artillery programmes and possibly on armoured vehicles.

Giat's ammunition business, Euro Impact, is spread across ten sites and has annual sales of about Fr2.6 billion (£318 million). It forms part of a group which is expected to have lost about Fr1.1 billion (£135 million) in 1994 on sales of Fr9 billion (£1.1 billion). Last year was the fourth consecutive year of losses.



Peter Birse, left, chairman of Birse Group, the builder and civil engineer, with Martin Budder, finance director, saw pre-tax losses of £678,000 (£1.4 million) in the six months to October 31. The loss per share is 0.3p (2p loss); there is no dividend (nil).

Scholey concentrates on Warburg

By NEIL BENNETT, DEPUTY BUSINESS EDITOR

SIR DAVID SCHOLEY, chairman and chief executive of S G Warburg, has resigned as a GEC director and a BBC governor to concentrate on returning the merchant bank to health. Sir David decided to

leave the jobs on Monday

when he was appointed Warburg's chief executive after the resignation of Lord Cairns.

His posts as a director of Chubb Corporation in the US and the London School of Economics are also in doubt, given his increased commitment to Warburg. Sir David

only joined the BBC in March 1994 and his term was due to last until 1999. He joined GEC in 1992. He had lined up both posts for his planned retirement in May, now cancelled.

He is also a director of the Bank of England, a post he has held since 1986, but is thought keen to retain it.

Drug trial setback hits British Biotech

BRITISH BIOTECH, the UK biotechnology company, has had a setback in final trials of one version of baumastat, its lead product, which is likely to delay the launch of the cancer treatment until the end of 1997 (writes Sarah Bagnall).

The nine-month setback knocked 140p off the shares before they bounced back to end the day 99p down at 491p. The warrants tumbled even further, at one point touching

39p before recovering to 50p, 80p down on the day. The warrants are exercisable at 525p in January 1996.

The setback — painful side effects suffered by patients with malignant ascites — affects about one third of the drug's programme. It was due to a change in the manufacturing process, which is being reversed.

Tempus, page 28

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
Australia \$	2.64	2.07
Austria Sch	17.55	15.08
Belgium Fr	51.39	47.08
Canada \$	2.339	2.178
Cyprus Cyp	0.770	0.715
Denmark Kr	9.88	9.09
Finland Mk	7.86	7.21
France Fr	9.82	7.97
Germany Dr	2.51	2.34
Greece Dr	380.00	305.00
Hong Kong \$	12.84	11.84
Ireland P	1.06	0.96
Israel	5.2345	4.4845
Italy Lira	8850.00	2400.00
Japan Yen	168.00	152.00
Malta	0.612	0.557
Netherlands Gld	2.789	2.559
Norway Kr	10.91	10.11
Portugal Esc	254.50	236.00
S Africa Rd	rel.	5.34
Spain Ptas	211.80	192.00
Sweden Kr	12.29	11.43
Switzerland Fr	2.12	1.94
Turkey Lira	rel.	63000.0
USA \$	1.678	1.546

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

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THE SUNDAYTIMES

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THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

New stores boost Safeway sales

ARGYLL yesterday delivered an upbeat message on sales growth at its Safeway supermarket chain, but gave warning that gross margins remained under pressure. The group said sales in the 17 weeks to February 11 rose by 9 per cent, with 7.6 per cent contributed by new stores and 1.4 per cent by existing stores. The upturn was helped by a strong performance over Christmas, with like-for-like sales rising by 4 per cent in the four weeks to December 31.

The growth still lagged that of its main competitors, however, with J Sainsbury reporting a 5.5 per cent rise in underlying sales over a similar period and Tesco the biggest increase with 7 per cent. Gross margins are expected to be slightly below those in the second half of last year as a result of Safeway's moves to sharpen its pricing. Tempus, page 28

Rathbone buys broker

RATHBONE BROTHERS, the private client banking and fund management group, is buying Laurence Keen, a City-based broker and fund manager, in a £9.96 million deal that will create one of the UK's biggest independent private client practices. The enlarged group will have £1.7 billion in discretionary funds under management. Laurence Keen will continue to trade under its own name. The deal is subject to shareholder approval. Rathbone said it expects pre-tax profits for 1994 to be not less than £6 million for the year to December 31. The shares closed up 5p at 278p.

Tepnel chairman quits

THE chairman of Tepnel Life Sciences, the biotechnology group that came to the market in 1993, resigned yesterday after barely six months in the job. Harold Morley said it was "the right time" for him to stand down. Anthony Martin, a former managing director of British Biotech, becomes acting chairman. Tepnel announced deepening losses of £2.4 million (£1.4 million loss) in the year to September 30. There is a loss per share of 10.3p (6p) and no dividend (nil). The shares, which were trading at more than 180p a year ago, closed down 1p at 30p.

Clydesdale staff strike

THE first one-day strike at the Clydesdale Bank was hailed as a success by members of the Bifu finance union. More than 50 branches were closed as a result of yesterday's action, which was in protest at plans to link pay to performance only, leaving up to 10 per cent of staff with a slim pay rise or none at all. Bifu is seeking a minimum increase of 4 per cent for all staff, with a further payment linked to performance. Clydesdale has proposed an average performance-linked payment of 3.5 per cent. A further one-day strike is planned for Monday, February 27.

THE DREAM BECOMES REALITY

I have spent a lifetime in the whisky industry and always, my dream was to create a new single malt.

That dream is now being realised at Lochranza, where we are opening the first legal distillery on the Isle of Arran for over 150 years. The first Arran malt will be coming off the still in the spring of this year.

What will Isle of Arran single malt be like? It has been said that when whisky was first made on the island, it was claimed to be the best in Scotland.

With the quality of Arran's air and water, I am confident that we will be making one of Scotland's great malts and I invite you to reserve your stock now by becoming a Founder Bondholder.

Founder Bondholders will have their own exclusive reserve which is obtainable at distillery prices — no retailers or other distributors involved. For the Bond price of \$450, excluding duty, they will receive five 12-bottle cases of blended whisky in 1998 and five cases of Arran single malt in the year 2001 — the perfect way to start the new century!

You don't have to take your cases all at once, so you can spread the pleasure over years if you like by leaving your malt to mature even longer in cask. You can also spread the pleasure by sharing the price of a Bond with friends.



HAROLD CURRIE

Chairman of Isle of Arran Distillers Ltd, former Secretary of the Scotch Whisky Association, and former Chairman of the Scotch Whisky Association.

As a Founder Bondholder, you will also have the privilege of continuing to buy whisky at distillery prices plus regular offers of very special single malts as we seek them out.

However, we plan to offer Founders' Bonds only until the distillery is formally in production.

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For a brochure, telephone 01290 553555, fax 01290 550177, or post the coupon to Harold Currie, Isle of Arran Distillers Ltd, 1, The Cross, Mauchline, Ayrshire KA5 5DA

Dear Mr Currie

Please send me details on how I can become an Isle of Arran single malt Founder Bondholder.

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Dre

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Jon Ashwor
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education

Back in the 5 young academy decided to app their theoretical ideas to world of commerce. C unlocked the door to uni. The other went on to wa director of numerous o only to watch in bewit his greater triumph. Today, the wheel of farce. Today, the wheel of full circle for Harold H. Professor Sir Richard S.

Next January, Sir R the Prof. in use his mor sobriquet — becomes the the University of Mar the rule of Science and T (Unist), where he pum ideas as Professor of Mar those years ago. Prof's on is about to retire after m decade as principal of an which has just become a in its own right. I am hope to make a lasting legacy in the shape of a new world-class business school.

Some £10 million has been raised towards the Manchester Federal School of Business and Management, which aims to combine three faculties under one umbrella. Sir R tapped his old City of money for a new venture. Hanlin, who has been on the project since it been budgeting and on track. The hope is instruction to rank and H.

That is the dream. For these two veterans of principal's study, all th and ageing photographs 64, looks no different other senior acad magnified by thick rola. 60, cuts a n Roland, framed and straped back.

The winter of 1995

Testi the j

How competent newly qualified chartered accountants? Certainly, he or she just completed three years demanding study, the professional examinations and learnt the ins and outs of working in a training of a professional practice other business.

The Institute of Char Accountants recognised future employers and business and private clients will also be interested precisely what skills its qualified members were able to demonstrate. So evaluating whether a competence based on candidates can show can do satisfactorily as as how much they k would be as discriminating as the present examining system.

A pilot scheme has set up for trainees specialising in taxation enter training in September 1994 and 1995.

The training that candidates receive exactly the same as they will not be to sit the existing intermediate examination. Instead, they paper to be depen of and will assess.

Mass examinations

BRITISH GAS 33

Now a muddle over direct debits

WEEKEND MONEY

ON LINE 36

Will Branson bring lower premiums?



How foreign taxmen view matrimony

Other countries' tax systems treat marriage more kindly than the Inland Revenue, Liz Dolan finds

The forces of Mammon were summoned this week by, of all people, the Archbishop of York in a bid to encourage more people into the marital fold. In a Valentine's Day address on BBC Wales, John Habgood urged the Government to improve tax incentives for married couples, maintaining that those who marry, rather than simply live together, were more prepared for a life of "selfless commitment", with concomitant benefits for their children and, thence, society as a whole.

Whether or not bribing people to marry is a particularly effective way of boosting spiritual values, Dr Habgood is correct in his contention that our Government has, for the past few years, been busily dismantling the financial advantages of the married state.

As our at-a-glance analysis indicates, Britain is following a pattern established by many other countries by moving towards the equalisation of benefits to married and single taxpayers. But, child benefits tend to be more generous abroad, and many countries still offer incentives to dependant spouses who stay at home to care for the children.

Lynne Berry, director of the Family Welfare Association, says: "This [Dr Habgood's call] is an attempt to find a way of supporting families, but it's not the most effective way. Poverty is the real problem, and tax relief would not make a big difference to that."

Lisa Harker, of the Child Poverty Action Group, says: "Marriage is irrelevant." Family patterns have changed quite drastically over the past decade, she says but, while the social security system has promoted traditional families, poverty is associated with non-traditional families.

United Kingdom: Until April 1994, taxpayers enjoyed marriage tax relief at 40 per cent of their income and basic rate taxpayers on 25 per cent. Consequently, the wealthier you were, the more you gained from marriage.

On April 6 last year, the married couple's allowance was cut to 20 per cent of the first £1720 for everyone, whatever their income level. This had the effect of halving the value of the allowance to a higher rate taxpayer from

£688 to £344. For a basic rate taxpayer, it fell by one fifth to the same amount. This year, the allowance slips to 15 per cent, worth £258.

Maurice Fitzpatrick, senior tax consultant at Chantrey Vellacon, the accountant, says: "A lot of people were predicting last year that the writing was on the wall for the married couple's allowance, but I think further cuts are unlikely—at least for the time being."

Everyone has a single person's allowance on the first £3,445 of income. Single parents bringing up a child receive an additional allow-

Incentives to stay-at-home spouses are still offered by many countries

ance of £1,720, the same rate as the married couple's allowance. Tax relief for parents was abolished in the mid-1970s in favour of child benefit—which was promptly frozen by the Conservatives for several years in the 1980s. A Labour think-tank has now proposed taxing child benefit paid to higher rate taxpayers.

Sweden: Swedes are taxed individually on a national and regional basis. The basic rate is 20 per cent national income tax and 31 per cent municipal income tax. There is no special allowance for married couples, but a new conservative mood is encouraging a revival in the custom. Couples, whether married or not, can cut their tax bills by dividing their earnings between them. This can enable the higher earner to stay below the next tax band.

Anders Clason, Counsellor for Cultural and Educational Affairs at the Swedish Embassy, says: "There is also a movement towards more christenings, and bourgeois values." Swedish wives no longer qualify for pensions through their husbands, but are paid them in their own right. There is a child allow-

ance of about £50 a month per child. A mother is guaranteed 100 per cent income a year after the child is born, even if she is not married. This is going to be cut to 75 per cent. A £1,000 allowance for married couples to furnish their first flat was abolished 15 years ago.

Germany: German taxes are high, but the system encourages the family. Single people do not have to earn very much more than average to start paying tax at 39 per cent. As in France, married couples are better off at the same income level if only one person works rather than if both partners do so. This is an obvious encouragement for mothers to stay at home.

Spouses can elect for separate assessment. If assessed jointly, they pay tax at the top rate of 53 per cent when taxable income reaches DM2400.84 (£1,043) a year. A single person reaches that level at an annual salary of DM1200.42. Joint assessment is beneficial if one partner earns more than the other. The standard (personal) allowance is DM108 or DM216 for a married couple opting for joint assessment. The allowance for dependent children is DM2,052 or DM4,014 and the single person exemption rate is DM5,616.

Italy: Stay-at-home spouses get favourable treatment. A tax credit of 757,000 lire (£306) is granted to the dependant spouse provided he or she does not earn more than 5.1 million lire. The tax system in Italy favours the low paid. Husband and wife are taxed separately. Parents get an allowance of 87,500 lire per child.

Australia: Dependant spouses get a tax credit worth A\$1,118 (£48), which is gradually reduced if they get a job—by 25 per cent after the first A\$282 of income, down to nil once they earn more than A\$4,000.

Spain: The Spanish may opt to be taxed separately, or to file joint tax returns for households. There are more favourable tax rates this way. If they choose the former, they start paying after the first 400,000 pesetas (£203) and, with the latter, after the first 800,000, which has obvious



France, Germany, Sweden? Where should the Addams family take their household for the best tax deal

advantages for non-working spouses. The bands are also wider for joint returns and there is a system of family credit for children. Families get an allowance of 25,200 pesetas for each member of the household. The system favours those on low incomes.

United States: There is an advantage to being married for those who opt for a joint declaration. Single people and spouses taxed separately get two allowances, one of \$3,700 and the other of \$2,350. Married couples assessed jointly get one of \$6,050 (£4,053), plus two of \$2,350. So, wives who do not want their husbands to know about their financial affairs pay more tax.

Canada: Married couples get a tax credit of C\$915 (£425) for the dependant spouse. This is reduced by 17 cents for every dollar earned over C\$338.

Additional research by Morag Preston

The more children, the merrier

The French are still very keen to encourage couples to bear the French citizens of the future, and the tax system is structured accordingly. A family with more than two children can substantially benefit.

Tax relief is given to families by means of a highly complex income splitting, or "unit", system, rather than by personal deductions or allowances.

Each family group is assigned a number of units, depending on family size and the status of its member. A single adult is worth one unit, a married couple, two units, a married couple, with one child, 2.5 units, and a married couple, with two children, three units. Each subsequent child is worth one additional unit. Consequently, families of five, or more, pay less tax, pro-rata, than those with one or two children.

Then the family's total income is split into a number of units. Tax is calculated for each subdivision, after which all sub-division's taxes are added to produce the family's total tax liability.

The more units into which the family's total income is divided, the lower the tax charge.

This system means the effective rate of tax on a family is lower than on a single individual earning the same amount as the family.

A married couple, where one earns £50,000 and the dependant spouse earns nothing, can split the working partner's income in half for tax purposes. The tax rate is progressive up to 58.6 per cent.

Single people with children may divide their income by two, with each child allocated units in the same way as those of a married couple.

Two people who are both working and both earning the same salaries get no real benefit unless they have children. It is a great advantage to have one significant earner.

Weekend Money is edited by Anne Ashworth

Don't miss the good news

The headlines have been living up to all the warnings given in this column since the beginning of the year. At home: sterling weak, inflation up, retail sales down, nurses and teachers in revolt, interest rate warnings and a Government in what looks like terminal decline. Abroad: the Mexican crisis lurches on, threatening other emerging economies; trade wars are rumbling, and Tokyo is suffering renewed earthquake shock.

Those who have followed the cautious strategy recommended here, leaning towards liquidity and short bonds, are probably feeling pretty smug. And yet... Perhaps what we need is Martin Lewis — remember his campaign for more good news? — to edit the business pages. Some of the news really is bad; some, as Anatole Kaletsky pointed out on Wednesday, falls into the Mark Twain obituary class: greatly exaggerated. There is no sterling crisis: just a strong mark and a bit of selling from the Far East, where they don't understand British posturing, and seriously believe that we might be about to leave the European Union. The rise in inflation and fall in sales are mainly seasonal adjustment trouble.

If growth is indeed slowing to a more sustainable rate, that is a soft landing — good news, as Wall Street has already recognised. It takes pressure off capacity constraints and commodity prices, al- though the US interest rates are getting near their peak, and where the Federal Reserve Board leads, the Bank of



ANTHONY HARRIS

England may well be relieved to follow. And that is just what you might call the negative good news. What hardly gets mentioned is the solidly positive news, especially of profits. The estimates that are coming out in America are startling: despite the competitive pressures which have caused lower than expected inflation, earnings may be up more than 40 per cent, far more than even the most optimistic forecasts.

The fact is that we are only now starting to get the measure of the leaner-and-fitter syndrome, the transformation which industry both there and in this country has achieved under the pressure of recession and over-valued exchange rates.

Lean production, rationalisation and down-sizing have so far appeared mainly as pain; we are only now getting the measure of what they can deliver in favourable conditions of rising demand and realistic exchange values. Inflation is low because unit costs are actually

falling; and worries about lack of capacity seem equally overdone. Leaner, fitter firms can squeeze out far more than was estimated on historic trends. Investment inadequate? Not so far, to judge from output. It is just that employers are readier to use more labour than more capital; hardly bad news.

Does all this mean that you should immediately plunge in and fill your boots with equities? It does not. Never forget that the big bull market happened when the news could hardly have been worse. This was not because investment professionals have perfect foresight: it was the asset price inflation which is the normal first result of an effort to revive growth through easier monetary policy. Equally, the recent setback is mainly the result of tighter monetary policy, and the latest Wall Street spurt due mainly to the hope that the tightening may be over. Short-term market movements have much more to do with monetary conditions than they have with the economic news.

What the good news does mean, though, is that current equity values are far more solidly based than they looked; the risk is fading. The surest sign is that despite all the headlines, the London market has moved broadly sideways rather than down. So it looks time to start deploying that prudent liquidity cushion you have built up. Not in a rush: conditions are still tight, and news still mixed. But as judiciously as you built it up.

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A collage of puzzle pieces with financial terms like "ANNUAL RETURNS", "GILTS", "MORTGAGES", "OVERSIGHT", "INVESTMENT", "MARKETS", and "QUEST OF INVESTORS".

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Sara McConnell looks into proposals to curb income support on new loans

Remortgaging risks increase

Homeowners looking to get a better deal by remortgaging could be caught by the Government's plans to curb income support on mortgage interest.

Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary, confirmed in a memorandum to the Social Security Advisory Committee this week that borrowers who remortgage after October 2 will count as new borrowers when the new rules take effect.

This will mean that if they lose their job or fall ill and cannot pay the mortgage, they will not get any help from the state for nine months. Under the present system, they would be able to claim half their mortgage interest for the first 16 weeks and the whole amount after that, if they qualified for income support.

Last week, *The Times* revealed that the Government was planning to abolish income support for divorced or separated people who took out business loans or other loans secured on their homes while they were married.

This was confirmed this week as more details of the Government's plans emerged, making it clear that millions could potentially be hit by the cuts in state provision. Lenders have said that repossession are bound to rise.

The restrictions will be put in place just as many borrowers move to shield themselves from the effect of rising inter-



Ian Darby, marketing manager at John Charcol, makes it clear to people remortgaging that they cannot rely on the state

est rates by remortgaging at a fixed rate. More than half the business of many brokers and lenders in the present dead housing market is from existing borrowers who want to remortgage rather than move.

According to the Council of Mortgage Lenders, more than £3 billion was borrowed for remortgaging and further advances in December 1994

alone. The figure also includes repayments to reduce debt.

London and Country, the independent broker, calculates that someone with a £60,000 loan who fixes the rate for two years at 6.45 per cent will save about £1,500 over the two years, including the costs of remortgaging.

Mr Lilley has made it clear that borrowers will be expected

to take out private insurance to cover mortgage payments if they lose their job or fall ill, but existing policies are expensive and restricted. Insurers say they will be designing new policies, but do not yet have enough detail about the Government's plans.

Ian Darby, marketing manager at John Charcol, said: "The changes are something

that we bring up with people remortgaging. We obviously make it clear they cannot rely on the state. We haven't believed before that mortgage payment protection makes sense because of the state support available, but we believe there will be changes in the products".

Payments from insurance policies will not be counted by

the Social Security Department when it assesses claims from income support. Mr Lilley made it clear that he expected policies to bridge the gap between claiming and receiving income support and also cover any gaps between the actual rate of interest a borrower is paying and a standard rate the Government is proposing to use to calculate how much the state will pay.

This standard rate is intended to reflect the current variable interest rate, but lenders and housing advisers warn that people trapped in a fixed mortgage at a higher rate or in a variable rate mortgage but unable to remortgage because of negative equity could be pushed into arrears even if they are getting state help because the whole payment will not be covered.

The Government admits there will be "significant losers" when using a standard rate of interest. An estimated 8 per cent of borrowers are paying interest of more than 10 per cent, well above the current variable rate of 8.35 per cent. They have either got fixed rates taken out when rates were higher, or they have other loans for repairs and improvements.

An estimated 2 per cent will be "significant gainers" when a standard rate is introduced, mainly because they have discounted first-time buyer loans lower than the standard rate.



COMMENT

ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance
Editor

Societies put on the charm

Suddenly there are weird goings on at several leading building societies. The message has come down from high: be nice to the customers.

The suspicious-minded are linking this development to the publication next Friday of the Treasury building society review. This will force the societies to confront such awkward issues as the rights of second-named holders on accounts and the need to be more accountable to members, that is, their savers and borrowers.

The rumour is that the societies have successfully lobbied to reduce the impact of the accountability measures. But the new rules will still oblige them to pay a little more heed to customers' requests for information and representation.

Chief executives who have seen in the Cheltenham & Gloucester disenfranchised widows saga what pressure discontented investors with superior letter-writing skills can bring to bear are preparing themselves for assault by post.

Especially disposed to be charming are societies that would like to find a merger partner, or a cosy takeover. Both need the consent of members. The National & Provincial, a society still held to be interested in any reasonable approach from a rival or a bank, was the first this week to smart up to customers with its Mutual Interests scheme. The project gives "practical effect to the concept of mutuality".

The 1.7 million members of the society at December 31 will, from April, enjoy a number of benefits, including discounts on personal loans and free mortgage valuations. But even the society's most devoted mem-

bers will see that many of the concessions are readily available elsewhere. While pretending to give something away, the N&P is merely attempting to retain business in a highly competitive savings and mortgage market.

For example, anyone opening an N&P savings account will receive an extra 1 per cent interest for three months, but only if the opening balance in the account is maintained for 12 months. How generous.

Temporary free cover on certain insurance policies is also on offer, encouraging customers to arrange cover through the N&P and put the society in the way of some nice commission.

The initial charge on the society's Personal Equity Plan (Pep) is also discounted by 2 per cent. But those wishing to avoid the up-front fee on a Pep can use one of the execution-only firms which rebate to the customer up to 4 per cent of a 5 per cent fee. Aspiring investors should also note that N&P Peps do not appear on any of the best buy lists at the leading Pep analysis groups.

Also attempting to get on the best side of its members is the Bradford & Bingley, another building society not necessarily wedded to independence.

The B&B is guaranteeing with its Mortgage Loyalty Card that when its 350,000 existing borrowers move house they will get a better deal than new customers. However, the society fails to mention that if the members prefer to stay put and apply for one of the B&B's new fixed-rate deals, they will be turned down. Back to the charm school, I think.

A-Z of Investment



In the money with The Times

A FOUR-WEEK series of the new *Times Money Guide* begins today with the A-Z of Investment.

The guide deals with everything from annuities to wine, from classic cars to National Savings, helping you to understand the complex jargon that is often intentionally used to keep the investor in a state of confusion.

We explain the complete panoply of investor regulation, that is designed to keep your money safe and to keep rogues from the financial services field. We also show you how to differentiate between a salesman and someone who can give you independent financial advice for a fee.

As the end of the tax year approaches, the next three guides, appearing over three weeks, will deal with personal equity plans (Peps), investment and unit trusts and tax and general financial planning.

Millions seek power shares

More than three million people have registered with share shops ahead of the £4 billion share issue in National Power and PowerGen, the electricity generators.

The public offer closes at noon on Wednesday, March 1. Investors must subscribe for a minimum of £352 worth of shares. This is for 200 shares, 120 in National Power and 80 in PowerGen. The incentive being offered to retail investors is a discount of 10p on each share in both companies, representing a saving of £20 on the minimum investment.

Payment will be in three instalments, spread over 18 months. The first instalment

prices the shares at 170p each in National Power and 185p each in PowerGen. The second instalment, which prices the shares at the same level as the first, is due on February 6, 1996. The price of the third instalment, which is payable on September 17, 1996, will not be announced until about March 6.

Final dividends on the shares for the financial year 1994-95 will be paid on the partly-paid shares.

As a reward for the 3.1 million people who registered with the share shops, there is either a discount of 25p a share on subsequent instalments, but only on the first 800 shares allocated, or, a one-for-15

share bonus, on the first 1,200 shares allocated. The offer is structured in two parts: a UK public offer targeted at UK retail investors, and two separate international tender offers, for shares in National Power and PowerGen, targeted at institutional investors in the UK and around the world.

The international offer's first instalment is 180p per National Power share and 195p per PowerGen share. At least 40 per cent of the shares have been set aside for UK private investors, but if there is a strong demand, the institutions could find their applications for shares scaled back.

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Robert Miller checks on the mood of the Hong Kong stock market in the wake of last year's tumble and January's jitters



Market sentiment may well be affected by political problems

Beyond the doom and gloom

On March 1, Hong Kong's Financial Secretary will unveil one of the last Budgets before the colony is handed back to China on July 1, 1997. The Budget is not expected to produce any big upsets but rather a "steady as she goes" signal to nervous investors and residents alike. But it is another important landmark in the countdown to hand-over day, and the importance that China attaches to it. There is already a symbolic clock ticking away in Tiananmen Square marking the precise second how much time is left before Hong Kong again becomes part of China.

But Hong Kong watchers believe the doom and gloom scenario, which saw the stock market fall by nearly 35 per cent in sterling terms last year and a further 10 per cent in January, is overdone. That does not mean, however, that the market is about to regain the lost ground all at once.

January's jitters in the Far East's stock markets, and in particular Hong Kong, wiped £20 million off the value

of TR Pacific investment trust's £140 million portfolio. Michael Watt, TR Pacific's manager, says the damage could have been much worse if he had not halved his weighting in Hong Kong in favour of a higher level of investment in South Korea and Taiwan. He explains: "We saw a huge rise in the Hong Kong stock market and property in general in 1993 and it was a clear case of overheating. China was also going through a similar phase." TR Pacific now has less than 10 per cent of its portfolio invested in Hong Kong.

He believes that stock market sentiment in the colony is bound to be affected by the underlying political problems in Sino-British relations. China believes quite firmly that the reforms announced by Chris Patten, the Governor of Hong Kong, are in breach of the spirit of the Basic Law deal made with the Thatcher Government in the early 1980s. Mr Watt adds, however, that China is pragmatic enough to accept that a vibrant Hong Kong stock market and econ-



Despite its dispute with Chris Patten, left, Peking takes a pragmatic view of the Hong Kong market



omy is vital to China's future prosperity.

He says: "The companies which are listed on the Chinese stock exchanges tend to be less high quality than their Hong Kong counterparts. The 'H' shares of Chinese companies listed in Hong Kong and New York are much better value and trading on markets with much more liquidity. Hong Kong is still the springboard for investors wanting to gain access to China." In terms of the benchmark indices that track the Pacific region, Hong Kong accounts for about 40 per cent. But the indices also include the Australian

market. So unless you were looking for a high-risk exposure to Hong Kong by itself, you might be wiser to invest in one of the Pacific or South East Asian unit or investment trusts rather than a single market. As an added precaution, you could invest small sums on a monthly basis through a low-cost savings scheme.

Adeline Ko, a fund manager on Fleming's Pacific desk, says there are always political undertones in the region. She cites not only the poor relationship between the UK and Chinese governments but, also the imminently predicted death of Deng

Xiaoping, the paramount leader. But the overriding influence on the future prosperity of the Hong Kong market is US interest rates, Ms Ko says.

As the Hong Kong and US dollars are linked, the colony's rates have had to rise in line with the US. Now, however, she adds: "The outlook on US rates is that they have nearly peaked. The market itself has come down to a level that value has started to appear. That is not to say the market cannot fall further and there is still volatility. But it should start to pick up although there will be a straight-line rise."

The information contained in this document, dated 16 February 1995, is in summary form and has been extracted from, and should be read in conjunction with, the listing particulars (the "Prospectus") dated 16 February 1995 relating to Albright & Wilson plc (the "Company") and its subsidiary undertakings (the "Group"). The document is issued in compliance with the requirements of the International Stock Exchange of the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland Limited (the "London Stock Exchange"). Listing particulars relating to the Company in accordance with the Listing Rules under Section 142 of the Financial Services Act 1986 (the "FSA") have been published which contain full details of the Company and the Placing and Public Offer (the "Offer"). Words and expressions defined in the Prospectus have the same meaning when used in this document, unless the context requires otherwise. A copy of the Prospectus has been delivered to the Registrar of Companies in England and Wales in accordance with Section 144 of the FSA and copies are available at the addresses listed in the Prospectus until 2 March 1995. The London Stock Exchange has authorised the issue of this document under Section 154 of the FSA without approving its contents. Application has been made to the London Stock Exchange for the whole of the issued Ordinary Shares capital of the Company to be admitted to the Official List. All dealings prior to receipt of share certificates and prior to Admission will be at the sole risk of the applicant(s) and may not be offered or sold in the US except to persons reasonably believed to be "Qualified Institutional Buyers" within the meaning of Rule 144A under the US Securities Act.

In applying for Ordinary Shares, you will be treated as applying solely on the basis of the information contained in the Prospectus and on the terms and conditions of the Offer set out therein. Before doing so, you are advised to read the Prospectus and to consult an independent financial adviser authorised under the FSA. Barclays de Zoete Wedd Limited ("BZW") and Lazard Brothers & Co., Limited ("Lazard Brothers") are members of The Securities and Futures Authority Limited. In respect of the Offer, BZW, Lazard Brothers and de Zoete & Bevan Limited are acting for the Company, Tannock Inc. and Tannock United Kingdom Holdings Limited ("TUKHL") and no-one else and will not be responsible to anyone other than the Company, Tannock Inc. or TUKHL for providing the protections afforded to customers of BZW, Lazard Brothers and de Zoete & Bevan Limited nor for providing advice in relation to the Offer. This document does not constitute or form part of any offer or invitation to sell, or the solicitation of any offer to buy, Ordinary Shares in any jurisdiction in which such offer or solicitation is unlawful and is not for distribution outside the United Kingdom, Guernsey and the Isle of Man. Residents of countries outside the United Kingdom should refer to the restrictions and limitations set out in Part VII of the Prospectus. The Ordinary Shares will not be offered, sold or transferred in the US except to persons reasonably believed to be "Qualified Institutional Buyers" within the meaning of Rule 144A under the US Securities Act.

ALBRIGHT & WILSON

ALBRIGHT & WILSON plc

(Incorporated and registered in England and Wales under the Companies Acts 1948 to 1987 with registered number 1134915)

Placing and Public Offer sponsored and underwritten by
Barclays de Zoete Wedd Limited
and co-sponsored by
Lazard Brothers & Co., Limited

of 313,500,000 Ordinary Shares of 25p each at 150p per share payable in full on application all of which are being placed
and of which not less than 15,675,000 Ordinary Shares are being offered for sale

Availability of Prospectus and Mini Prospectus

Copies of the Prospectus and Mini Prospectus may be obtained from:

Barclays de Zoete Wedd Limited
Ebbogate House
2 Swan Lane
London EC4A 3TS

Albright & Wilson plc
210-222 Hagley Road West
Oldbury
Worley
West Midlands B68 0NN

Lazard Brothers & Co., Limited
21 Moorfields
London EC2P 2HT
Lloyds Bank Plc
Lloyds Bank Registrars
Receiving Bank Services
Antholm House
71 Queen Street
London EC4N 1SL

and from the following branches of Lloyds Bank Plc:

4 Union Street
Aberdeen AB1 1NJ
125 Colmore Row
Birmingham B3 3AD
55 Corn Street
Bristol BS99 7LE
3 Sidney Street
Cambridge CB2 3HQ

27 High Street
Cardiff CF1 1QZ
113/115 George Street
Edinburgh EH2 4TF
12 Bothwell Street
Glasgow G2 6NY
6-7 Park Row
Leeds LS1 1NX
53 King Street
Manchester M60 2ES
102 Gray Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE99 1SL
1/5 High Street
Cardiff
Oxford OX1 4AA

Procedure for application

The following instructions should be read in conjunction with the Public Application Form set out opposite.

- Insert in section 1 (in figures) the number of Ordinary Shares for which you are applying at 150p per share. Applications must be for a minimum of 200 Ordinary Shares and in one of the following multiples:

Applications for:	In multiples of:
200 to 1,000 shares	100 shares
1,001 to 3,000 shares	500 shares
3,001 to 10,000 shares	1,000 shares
10,001 to 20,000 shares	2,000 shares
20,001 to 50,000 shares	5,000 shares
50,001 to 100,000 shares	10,000 shares
over 100,000 shares	50,000 shares

An application for any other number of Ordinary Shares may be received.

- Insert in section 2 (in figures) the amount of your cheque or banker's draft.

The amount of your cheque or banker's draft should be the Offer Price of 150p per Ordinary Share multiplied by the number of Ordinary Shares inserted in section 1. For example:

Number of Ordinary Shares for which you are applying	Your payment at 150p per Ordinary Share	Number of Ordinary Shares for which you are applying	Your payment at 150p per Ordinary Share
200	£ 300	900	£1,350
300	£ 450	1,000	£1,500
400	£ 600	1,500	£2,250
500	£ 750	2,000	£3,000
600	£ 900	2,500	£3,750
700	£1,050	3,000	£4,500
800	£1,200	4,000	£6,000

- Sign and date the Application Form in section 3.

The Application Form may be signed by someone else on your behalf (and/or on behalf of any joint applicant(s) duly authorised by power(s) of attorney to do so, but the power(s) of attorney for a copy certified by a solicitor must be enclosed for inspection. A corporation should sign under the name of a duly authorised official whose representative capacity must be stated.

- Insert your full name and address in BLOCK CAPITALS in section 4.

Applications may not be made by anyone aged under 18 (under 20 in Jersey), but you may apply as a parent, grandparent or guardian of a child under 18 (under 20 in Jersey) for the benefit of that child. To do this, you should write your own name and address in BLOCK CAPITALS in section 4 and put the initials of the child in the Account designation box, insert "PARENT", "GRANDPARENT" or "GUARDIAN" as the applicant's status in section 4. If you make an application for a child in this way, you may also apply separately for your own benefit.

If you are a UK or EC regulated person to whom paragraph 5 of Part VII of the Prospectus applies, insert your status (e.g. "bank" or "broker") in section 4.

- Pin a single personal cheque, building society cheque or banker's draft to your completed Application Form. Your cheque or banker's draft must be payable to "Lloyds Bank Plc - A/C Albright & Wilson Offer" for the full amount payable on application as inserted in section 2 and should be crossed "Account Payee".

No receipt will be issued for the payment, which must be solely for the application.

In each case the cheque or banker's draft must be drawn in sterling on an account at a branch of a bank in the United Kingdom which is either a settlement member of the Cheque and Credit Clearing Company Limited or the CHAPS Town Clearing Company Limited or a member of either of the committees of the Scottish or Belfast Clearing House, or which has arranged for its cheque and banker's drafts to be cleared through the facilities provided by either of those committees or committees and must bear a United Kingdom bank sort code number in the top right hand corner.

Applications may be accompanied by a personal cheque drawn by someone other than the applicant(s), but any monies to be returned will be done so by returning the cheque to the first named applicant or by sending a cheque crossed "Account Payee" in favour of the applicant(s).

Where verification is required pursuant to the Money Laundering Regulations 1993 and verification is not provided within a reasonable time, monies to be returned will be sent by cheque, banker's draft or banker's payment to the branch of the bank or society shown on the remittance. All returned monies, without interest and net of expenses, will be despatched at the risk of the applicant to the address shown in section 4 of the Application Form, whether or not the cheque or banker's draft was drawn by the applicant or a third party.

- You may apply jointly with up to three other persons WHO MUST ALSO SIGN THE APPLICATION FORM.

You must then arrange for the Application Form to be completed by or on behalf of each other joint applicant (up to a maximum of three other persons). Their full names should be inserted in BLOCK CAPITALS in section 6. Section 6 must be signed by or on behalf of each joint applicant (other than the first applicant, who should complete section 4 and sign in section 3).

If anyone is signing on behalf of any joint applicant(s), the power(s) of attorney or a copy certified by a solicitor must be enclosed for inspection.

The Money Laundering Regulations 1993

The Regulations came into force on 1 April 1994. Under the provisions of the Regulations, an applicant may be required to produce satisfactory evidence of his identity or the identity of any person on whose behalf he is applying under the Offer. Failure to do so within a reasonable time may result in the application being rejected or in the contract arising on the acceptance of the Application Form being terminated.

You must send your completed Application Form, together with your personal cheque, building society cheque or banker's draft for the full amount payable and, if applicable, the power(s) of attorney under which you are signing or a certified copy thereof, by post, or deliver them by hand, to Lloyds Bank Plc, Lloyds Bank Registrars, Receiving Bank Services, Antholm House, 71 Queen Street, London EC4N 1SL, so as to be received not later than 3.00 pm on Friday, 24 February 1995.

If you post your Application Form, you are recommended to use first class post and allow at least two working days for delivery.

Proximate copies of Application Forms are not acceptable. Multiple or suspected multiple applications may be rejected at their entirety.

Application Forms must be received by 3.00 pm on Friday, 24 February 1995

Copies of the Prospectus and Mini Prospectus may be obtained at the above addresses during normal business hours until 2 March 1995 and the Prospectus will also be available during normal office hours at the Company Announcements Office of the London Stock Exchange, Capel Court Entrance, off Bartholomew Lane, London EC2N 1HP on 17 and 20 February 1995. However, all Public Application Forms must be sent by post or delivered by hand to the address specified on those forms.

Public Application Form

Public Offer by BZW and Lazard Brothers of Ordinary Shares of 25p each at 150p per share, payable on application.

section 1 I/we offer to acquire for any smaller number of Ordinary Shares for which this application is accepted at 150p per Ordinary Share on the terms and conditions set out in the Prospectus relating to the Offer dated 16 February 1995.

section 2 I/we attach below a personal cheque, building society cheque or banker's draft payable to "Lloyds Bank Plc - A/C Albright & Wilson Offer" for £*
*150p multiplied by the number of Ordinary Shares inserted in section 1

section 3 Signature _____ Dated _____ 1995

section 4 Applicant's name and address: PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS

Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms	A/C designation (if applicable)
For name(s) in full	Applicant's status (if applicable)
Surname	
Address in full	
Postcode	Daytime telephone no.

section 5 ☐ Pin here your personal cheque, building society cheque or banker's draft made payable to "Lloyds Bank Plc - A/C Albright & Wilson Offer" and crossed "Account Payee" for the amount set out in section 2.

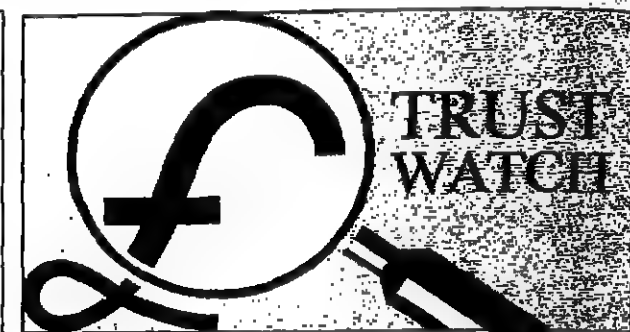
section 6 Additional joint applicant(s) (if any): PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS

Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms	Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms	Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms
For name(s) in full	For name(s) in full	For name(s) in full
Surname	Surname	Surname
Signature	Signature	Signature

section 7 I/we warrant that:

- I am/we are not applying as, or as nominee(s) or agent(s) of (a) person(s) who is/are or may be, (a) person(s) liable to stamp duty or stamp duty reserve tax under Sections 67, 70, 93 or 98 of the Finance Act 1986 (depository receipts and clearance services);
- I am/we are not applying as, or as nominee(s) or agent(s) of (a) person(s) who is/are, (a) market maker(s) in Ordinary Shares in Albright & Wilson plc within the meaning of Section 81 of the Finance Act 1986;
- I am/we are not applying as, or as nominee(s) or trustee(s) of, a body of persons established for charitable purposes only; and
- I am/we are not applying on behalf of or with a view to the re-offer, sale or transfer to, or for the benefit of, a US Person or (a) "Qualified Institutional Buyer" within the meaning of Rule 144A under the US Securities Act.

Delivery of Application Forms
Applications must be received by 3.00 pm on 24 February 1995. The completed Public Application Form, together with a personal cheque, building society cheque or banker's draft for the amount payable and, if applicable, the power(s) of attorney under which you are signing, or a certified copy thereof, should be posted, or delivered by hand to Lloyds Bank Plc, Lloyds Bank Registrars, Receiving Bank Services, Antholm House, 71 Queen Street, London EC4N 1SL so as to be received not later than 3.00 pm on Friday, 24 February 1995.



Hot on the heels of the Royal Bank of Scotland's re-entry into the unit trust market comes Abbey National. This week the building society turned bank threw its hat into the ring with the launch of a new personal equity plan linked to a UK growth trust.

The Abbey National Pep, which will be managed by a new unit trust subsidiary, requires a minimum investment of £1,000. Investors will be offered a 1 per cent discount on lump sums of between £2,000 and £3,999 and 2 per cent on £4,000 to £6,000. The initial charge is 5 per cent with an annual fee of 1.25 per cent.

To encourage investors to take a long-term view, Abbey National will give a 2 per cent "loyalty" bonus based on the amount invested after five years, provided no withdrawals have been made.

Charles Toner, managing director of Abbey National's retail division, says: "Other trust launches will follow shortly and they will possibly offer a more diversified geographic base. There will also be regular monthly savings schemes attached to the trusts." Another group to make full use of the Pep wrapping is Eagle Star's UK Smaller Companies trust. The

offer period closes on February 28 and investments made before then qualify for a 1 per cent "enhancement". The minimum investment is £1,000 (£40 a month). The initial charge on Eagle Star's unit trust is 6 per cent, as is the annual management fee of 1.5 per cent.

The new High Reserve fund unit trust from Lloyds Bank will take advantage of the new corporate bond Pep rules which come into force sometime after the start of the new tax year in April. The trust's initial gross yield is estimated at 6.5 per cent and income will be paid quarterly. Minimum investment is £1,000.

There was a twist this week in the progress of the new Worldwide Pharmaceutical investment trust from Finsbury Asset Management. When Finsbury published the trust's pathfinder prospectus on Wednesday it emerged that the newcomer's sponsor, Rea Brothers, the merchant bank, had agreed in principle to buy Finsbury's four existing investment trusts with £185 million under management.

Details:
Abbey National: 0800 100888.
Eagle Star: 01242 577555.
Lloyds Bank: local branches

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Pension caught in wa ord

The employees of a company that goes under are victims twice over. First they lose their jobs. Then they can be left in ignorance about their pension fund contributions. After *The Times* reported on the extensive powers of independent trustees appointed to pension schemes when businesses go bust, many employees came forward to voice their worries about their pension schemes. Their concerns centre on the time it takes to wind up the scheme and distribute the benefits. Some are facing a wait of as long as five years. Nowhere have delays been more apparent than in the winding up of thousands of small company pension schemes that were set up by Crown Financial Management in the 1980s and subsequently sold to Century Life at the end of 1992. Century Life specialises in buying and administering smaller insurance companies, or unwanted parts of other insurers' business. Many involved with the Crown schemes believe that Century Life is not performing as fast as it might. They also believe that the problem is not restricted to Century Life. Bruce Piggott, a member of one of the pension schemes, who has been waiting four-and-a-half years to get news of his pension benefits, says: "There seems to be no commercial incentive for any of the organisations involved to complete their task quickly." However, Penny Groom, of the Occupational Pensions Advisory Service, says putting a time limit on pension scheme wind-ups could cause more problems than it solves. Nevertheless, she admits that OPAS has had to ask receivers, insurance companies and

The risks of a fixed rate

Sara McConnell
tracks the new
fixed-rate
offers launched
by societies



The way we were: National Savings in the Second World War appealed to the patriotic

Building societies are trying to tempt savers to tie up their money for up to five years in fixed-rate bonds in return for interest rates that may look quite good now but almost certainly will not be so attractive if base rates continue to rise.

More generous looking rates for savers are gradually appearing in the windows of building society and bank branches as institutions start to reflect on the two base rate rises of recent months.

National Westminster and Lloyds have both raised savers' rates by up to 1 per cent, while Birmingham Midshires has added a quarter of a percentage point. The base rate now stands at 6.75 per cent, one percentage point higher than in November.

Most societies have not raised mortgage or variable savings rates since the second base rate rise at the beginning of this month. Instead, they are launching fixed-rate bonds to try to draw in new money or lock up that of existing customers in other accounts. Several societies have launched fixed-rate bonds this week.

The Chelsea is paying a fixed rate of 8.5 per cent gross, 6.38 per cent net, for three years on balances of £5,000 and over.

The Portman and the National & Provincial have both launched step-up bonds, a variation on a plain fixed rate. These pay a fixed rate of interest every year, rising by a set amount on each anniversary of the investment. The rates are set at the outset.

The Portman's four-year step-up bond will earn 7 per cent gross, 5.25 per cent net, in the first year, rising to 11 per cent gross, 8.25 per cent net, in the fourth year on a minimum investment of £500. The rate remains the same regardless of the balance.

National & Provincial savers can choose to fix stepped-up rates for between one and five years. They will earn 7 per cent gross, 5.25 per cent net, in the first year, rising to 9 per cent gross, 6.75 per cent net, in year five on balances of between £500 and £10,000.

Once you have opened one of these bonds there are strin-

gent penalties for withdrawals. N&P pays 120 days' interest after the first 120 days, during which you are not allowed to make withdrawals. So if interest rates start to rocket upwards, you will be stuck.

Advertisements for these and other fixed rates will stress the gross rate and if it is a stepped rate bond, the gross rate in the final year. You will get this rate if you stay the course and are not a taxpayer. If you pay tax, the rates start looking less attractive. The net rates published above are what you will get as a basic rate taxpayer. If you are a higher rate taxpayer you will get even less.

It is worth comparing returns on fixed rate bonds with those paid on other types of account, says Vicki Burn, deputy editor of *Moneyfacts*, the specialist magazine. Postal accounts, which often allow instant access, pay some of the best rates. If you have £5,000 to invest you would get:

■ 6.55 per cent gross, 4.91 per cent net, annually in the Coventry Building Society's new postal account, Postal 50. You must give 50 days' notice of withdrawal.

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A long wait for National Savings

It is more than a year since investors in National Savings accounts with variable rates (investment accounts, income bonds and ordinary accounts) saw rates rise on their savings. It is five months since rates rose on accounts with fixed rates (pensioners' income bonds, savings certificates, children's bonds and First Option Bonds), to bring them into line with gilt rates. And, if there are plans to raise them further to take account of recent interest rises, there was no sign of that this week.

Savers have deposited £3.2 billion in National Savings since April. A big chunk has gone into premium bonds, which have had a new lease of life since the monthly jackpot was raised to £1 million.

Ironically, it could be the legendary British love of gambling that is actually keeping savers' rates down. The reason for National Savings' existence is to bring in money to fund government debt. Every year, the Government sets National Savings an "assumption", effectively a target. This year it has to raise £3.5 billion by April 1995, but because of

huge inflows through premium bonds, it is well on track. If it was not, it would be under pressure to raise interest rates to attract more money away from building societies and banks.

Alternatively, it could increase the maximum permitted holding as it did last year. National Savings emphasised that it still has to compete with building societies.

But many of its fixed-rate plans lock people into rates for five years, paying a minimal amount of interest as long as the plans are not cashed in early, or applying stringent penalties.

Fixed-interest certificates, index-linked certificates and capital bonds pay no interest if they are cashed in in the first year.

People aged over 65 who hold pensioners' guaranteed income bonds have to give 60 days' notice and lose 60 days' interest if they withdraw early. So anyone thinking of putting away money in a fixed rate account may do better to hold off until interest rates rise.

National Savings was giving nothing away this week. But it hinted that people looking to start saving may find it well worth waiting.

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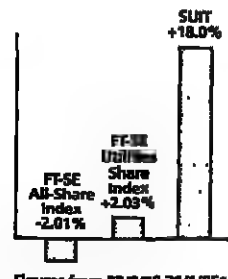
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Employees whose pension schemes are being wound up can face five-year delays, says Helen Pridham

Pensioners caught up in waiting ordeal

The employees of a company that goes under are victims twice over. First they lose their jobs. Then they can be left in ignorance about their pension fund contributions. After *The Times* reported on the extensive powers of independent trustees appointed to pension schemes when businesses go bust, many employees came forward to voice their worries about their pension schemes. Their concerns centre on the time it takes to wind up a scheme and distribute the benefits. Some are facing a wait of as long as five years.

Nowhere have delays been more apparent than in the winding up of thousands of small company pension schemes that were set up by Crown Financial Management in the 1980s and subsequently sold to Century Life at the end of 1992.

Century Life specialises in buying and administering smaller insurance companies, or unwanted parts of other insurers' business. Many involved with the Crown schemes believe that Century Life is not performing as fast as it might. They also believe that the problem is not restricted to Century Life.

Bruce Piggott, a member of one of the pension schemes, who has been waiting four-and-a-half years to get news of his pension benefits, says: "There seems to be no commercial incentive for any of the organisations involved to complete their task quickly."

However, Penny Green, of the Occupational Pensions Advisory Service, says putting a time limit on pension scheme wind-ups could cause more problems than it solves. Nevertheless, she admits that OPAS has had to ask receivers, insurance companies and

independent trustees to speed up their acts. To get things moving is the aim of J Keith Park & Co, a firm of solicitors that has formed an action group to fight for the rights of the Crown/Century Life pension scheme members after finding that some of its own staff were affected. Rod Knight, head of financial services litigation at the firm, says that so far about 4,000 scheme members have contacted him. Between 100,000 and 250,000 people are believed to be involved in the 5,500 schemes transferred. About 4,750 of the schemes have now been discontinued and are being wound up.

Greg Osborne, Crown spokesman, explaining the reason for the transfer of business to Century Life, says: "We were finding this business very complex and expensive to administer. We discussed the matter with Century Life and they were confident they could do the job more efficiently than us with fewer people. We believed the transfer was in the interests of our clients. It was approved by the High Court in December 1992."

However, Crown's systems had been paper based, and Century Life's plans to computerise them proved difficult. John Deane, Century Life customer services director, says: "We are having to reassess the data for each and every scheme before we can take any further action."

But he says that, since the beginning of 1994, Century Life has been working to a three-year project plan and meets every three months with representatives of OPAS and the Department of Social Security to discuss progress.

Mr Deane says: "So far we are bang on target. We have undertaken a thorough data audit of 32 per cent of the schemes and been able to quote benefits to trustees in 23 per cent of cases." But this means it will still take until 1997 for Century Life to work its way through all the schemes.

However, even when Century passes its findings to the trustees, there is no guarantee members will be informed quickly of their fund values. Indeed, Century says to avoid problems arising at this stage, it is preparing a document reminding trustees of their duties. Where a company is in liquidation, independent trustees are responsible for winding up the scheme. They draw fees from the pension fund for as long as this process takes.



Norman Church is sceptical about small company schemes

How ombudsman failed to get results

Even if you get the Pensions Ombudsman on your side, it may not help you much — as Norman Church found out recently. He was employed by R. K. Transport Ltd of Croydon during the 1980s, and in 1986 became a member of his employer's pension scheme, which was then managed by Crown, but later passed to Century Life.

In 1989, he left the company to join the Royal Mail. When he approached his former employer, who was also the trustee of the pension scheme, for a transfer value in 1991, he received no response. So he and another ex-colleague sought help, first from the Occupational Pension Advisory Service, and then the Pensions Ombudsman.

In December 1994, the Ombudsman gave their former employer a time limit of one month to provide more information about the scheme, and three months to provide details of pension values. He also ruled that the employer should pay both men £100 as compensation for the delay.

When Mr Church still heard nothing from his former

employer, he contacted Century Life direct, only to be told on January 30 this year that his former employer's company had gone into liquidation in June 1993.

Because his former employer had subsequently set up another company with a very similar name, Mr Church was unaware of the liquidation — and so was the Pensions Ombudsman. What is more, the liquidator of the original company was unaware of the existence of the company pension scheme, and had been within two days of finally winding up the company. The liquidator must now appoint an independent trustee, but Mr Church is worried about the impact that this trustee's fees will have on his fund.

Century Life says it is now monitoring the list of firms going into liquidation.

For Mr Church, the case has been an eye opener. He is very happy with the Post Office scheme, which keeps him well informed about benefits, but he is sceptical about small company schemes. "There seems to be nothing employees can do to protect their own interests,"

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In uncertainty...

China sits waiting for a new leader to emerge. And nowhere can be sure to avoid the impact of the new regime. In Europe, political confusion is the order of the day. Both Great Britain and Italy see their current political order either threatened or in tatters as a result of crises of confidence or scandals. But Europe has its share of world class companies, and the prospect of vigorous competition as Eastern Europe re-builds.

North America, too, has had its own share of investment inertia as the Clinton administration founders on a reef of unpopularity and allegations, but US companies are renowned for their ability to react positively to competition and opportunity.

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And in the Far East, political uncertainty in North Korea continues to cast a shadow over parts of the region. Nonetheless, the emerging economies on the Pacific Rim still contain some of the most exciting and ambitious companies to be found anywhere in the world — not least in the extremely attractive high-tech sector.

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On line for lower life premiums

Richard Branson's entry into the life and pensions arena with Virgin Direct could cut costs, Liz Dolan says



Richard Branson's Virgin Direct plans to offer a "menu of lifetime needs" in its financial package

Are life and pensions premiums set to plummet? The question has to be asked in a week when Direct Line launched its new low-price dial-a-life-policy service, and the life and pensions industry itself admitted that new annual premiums business had plunged by 10 per cent in 1994.

Later this year, both Richard Branson's Virgin Direct and Marks & Spencer follow Direct Line into the life and pensions arena.

All three are still largely trusted by a public that has been horrified by tales of pension mis-selling and sky-high commissions charged by household names in the life industry. The images of many banks and building societies have been similarly besmirched.

Virgin's new financial services operation, another telephone-only service, kicks off with a no-frills, cut-price Pep in the first week of March, and plans to follow that up with an assault on the life and pensions market in the autumn.

The insurance industry was completely wrong-footed when Direct Line first entered the market ten years ago. Virtually dismissed as a flash-in-the-pan interloper, the new boy on the block rose to become Britain's biggest private motor insurer in less than a decade, thus vastly swelling the coffers of its parent, the Royal Bank of Scotland, and sending the personal fortune for Peter Woods, its founder and chairman, into the stratosphere.

When Direct Line widened its field of operations to household insurance, its competitors tried a bit harder to compete, cutting premiums and setting up various telephone-based operations. But, although these had the magic word "Direct" tacked on to the company's name, they still offered basically the same commission-pay-

ing, intermediary-led services as previously.

David Nisbet, life assurance analyst at NatWest Securities, is convinced that insurers will be faster on their feet this time round. "The insurance industry has now accepted that it was far too slow to react to Direct Line and it is determined not to make the same mistake again on the life side," he says. "But anything it does will have to be at the expense of margins." In other words, whatever happens, the price of life assurance is likely to fall substantially.

Direct Line's service is aimed at people who want straight protection policies untainted by investment products. Its staff are paid decent salaries, and premiums are kept low

by minimal overheads and the fact that staff do not have to waste a lot of time trying to drum up business.

Direct Line's decision to concentrate on protection-only policies shields it from the growing debate about industry ethics. An increasingly sophisticated public is beginning to suspect that bemused punters are too often persuaded to buy incomprehensible investment products when they really wanted a straight protection policy, just to line the pockets of sales staff and companies. This general unease is thought to be one of the reasons for the sharp fall in new business last year.

"To date, there is no doubt that life companies have managed to hide fairly hefty margins in relatively

complicated products," Mr Nisbet says. He reckons that the arrival of the new user-friendly, cut-price brigade will make further inroads into profits already under pressure from commission disclosure, introduced at the beginning of this year.

From January 1, anyone selling a life assurance product has to disclose the amount of commission, and related expenses, that customers will have to pay. Under the old system, most policyholders were totally ignorant of the fact that a large chunk of the premiums they paid in the first few years were gobbled up in commission charges. Neither Direct Line nor M&S pays commission to sales staff and Virgin has no intention of doing so.

If competitors set up their own

telephone services, or new telephone sellers enter the market, there is likely to be a general increase in "unbundling" — Direct Line's term for splitting investment and protection products. But, Mr Nisbet says: "I think telephone selling will appeal most to the 25 to 40 age band. It should take a reasonable proportion of that market, but it is a relatively small segment — certainly less than 10 per cent of premiums."

Virgin disagrees. "We think there are about ten million people who would benefit from Peps, but most of them are too scared to come forward, either because they don't understand the product or are nervous of being ripped off," a spokesman said. "Our Peps will be really simple to understand."

A wide ranging marketing campaign, with advertisements appearing in glossy consumer magazines as well as newspapers, is expected to paint Virgin Direct as a friendly, down to earth alternative to the unapproachable, or downright morally reprehensible, competition.

But, in common with both Marks & Spencer, which already markets unit trusts and Peps, and Direct Line, Virgin's aggressive approach will be restricted to competitors, not to customers. These will always have to make the first move, it says, a straight reversal of the traditional industry view that life assurance is always sold, not bought. Old hands say that this "come up and see us sometime" approach "will fail because, while the public may flock to buy cut-price motor insurance products that it does not absolutely have to buy at a specific time, it may be a different kettle of fish."

It is true that M&S has yet to pose any real threat to its unit trust and Pep rivals, although this may be partly due to the pedestrian performance of its products, and Direct Line does not appear to have scored the same mega-success with its household business as it did with motor.

Finally, there is the question of investment performance. "It makes little sense for any investor to seek a discount if it means he is compromised into accepting an inferior investment," Haydn Green, of the Pep Shop, a financial adviser, says. "Virgin is likely to discover that these people are more discerning than Cola drinkers."

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VIRGIN Direct has been set up in partnership with Norwich Union. Virgin says: "Norwich Union were the only people who were prepared to do it our way. That's to say to devise new products to our specifications."

The Pep, to be launched in the week ending March 4, will track the performance of a specific investment index, but which one has yet to be revealed. Virgin claims that

charges will be lower than for other Peps on the market.

The life and pensions package, to be launched in the autumn, will offer customers "a menu of lifetime needs". Answers to questions about customers' circumstances and requirements will be fed into a computer, which will then suggest which products would suit them. Policyholders pay just one premium, however many products they choose.

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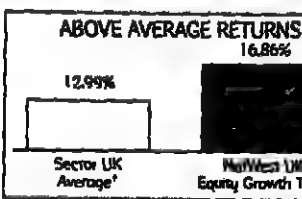
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*Source: Micropal, based on 64,000 investments 2.7.79 - 12.94 net income reinvested, after tax. Past performance is no guarantee of future performance. The value of investments and income from them can go down as well as up, and taking into account the initial charges, you may not get back the amount of your original investment, especially in the early years. Sun Life Portfolio Consulting Services Limited is a member of IFA. The tax treatment of PEPs may change in the future, the value of the tax reliefs depend on your individual circumstances.

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Sandra Tucker has found children

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CHASE DE VER

THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

Credit card charges rise

CREDIT card rates, which are slow to fall when rates elsewhere are being decreased, are rising in response to the latest base rate rises (Morag Preston writes).

Barclaycard has taken the lead and will be raising its monthly rate from 1.585 per cent to 1.65 per cent, APR 22.9 per cent, from March 1.

According to Bob Potts, chief executive at Barclaycard: "We have had the Barclaycard rate at its lowest level for over 15 years, despite three base rate rises over the last six months. It is with reluctance that we make today's announcement."

Mark Christopher, of Save & Prosper, which has its own competitively priced card, predicts that credit card interest rates could rise by more than 1 per cent over the next year.

He said: "Because there has been an increase in funding costs and no increase in the credit card interest rate for so long, a lot of credit card rates will go up in the next couple of months."

"Banks are still saddled with the problem of people who pay off their balances in full each month and so don't pay interest at all."

To keep its rate at APR 14.6, Save & Prosper offers various

choices to attract people who use their credit cards to borrow money.

Mr Christopher points out the reverse Robin Hood effect, whereby borrowers subsidise the half who pay their accounts in full and end up paying interest rates over the odds.

He said: "This is proof that credit cards are imperfect products. People who pay their bill in full should choose a card like Switch or Barclays Connect, which debits their account directly. They should review what they pay on their credit card, and look for cheaper alternatives."

Credit card interest rates are under review at NatWest and Midland. NatWest last changed its rate in January when it was reduced by 0.1 per cent.

The current rate at Midland is 22.3 per cent. It was last increased in October 1990 when the monthly rate was 2.35 per cent, and has been falling since then.

A Midland spokesman said: "It is a decision based on risk, much more than mortgage lending or personal loan lending. The majority of people don't have a standing order or direct debit, so it is a relationship established on trust."

SAVERS' BEST BUYS

Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Yorkshire BS 0800 378936	1st Class Acc	Postal	£1,000	6.20 Yr
Skipton BS 01756 700511	3 High Street	Instant	£2,000	6.25 Yr
Britannia BS 01638 391741	Capital Trust	Postal	£10,000	6.50 Yr

Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Halifax BS 01422 333333	Guaranteed Sav	2yr bond	£2,000	8.10 F/Yr
Britannia BS 0800 269655	3 year Fixed	3yr bond	£2,000	8.75 F/Yr
Co-operative Bank 0800 125100	Fixed Rate Bond	3yr bond	£2,000	9.25 OM
Bristol & West BS 01179 284271	Fixed Rate Bond	5yr bond	£5,000	8.70 F/Mly

TESSAS (TAX FREE)	Account	of term	Deposit	Rate	paid
	Sun Banking Corp 01438 744500	5 year	£8,900	9.00	F/Yr
	Hinckley & Rugby BS 01455 251234	5 year	£3,000 A	7.65	Yr
	Barclays Bank 0800 400100	5 year	£3,000	7.50	Yr
	Dunfermline BS 01383 627727	5 year	£3,000	7.50	Yr

CREDIT CARDS BEST BUYS

Card type	Interest per month	APR%	Fee per annum
Robert Fleming S&P 0800 282101	1.00%	14.60%	£12
Royal Bank of Scotland 01702 349393	1.25%	16.00%	NIL C
Alliance & Leicester 0500 900255	1.375%	18.90%	NIL C

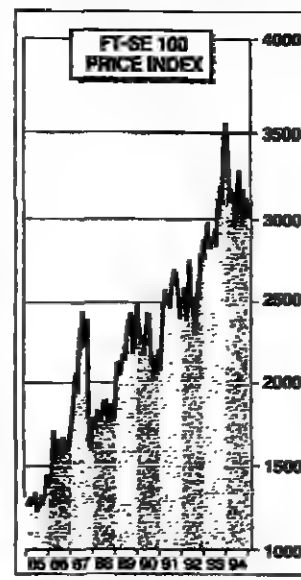
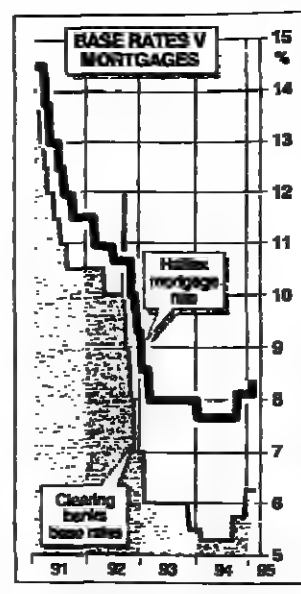
PERSONAL LOANS BEST BUYS

APR	Monthly payment on £3,000 for 3 yrs with insurance	No insurance
13.60%	£114.27	£100.83
15.40%	£120.57	£105.29
16.50%	£125.00	£108.22
18.90%	£135.81	£113.77

No. A - Fee for account. In the interest paid column, C = no interest free period D = annual fee included £1.5K+ charged per annum E = Annual fee waived for 1st year for new accounts F = fixed rate (all other rates are variable); OM denotes interest paid on maturity.

* RATES SHOWN ARE GROSS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. PLEASE CHECK RATES BEFORE INVESTING.

Source: Moneyfacts, the Monthly Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01932 500 688)



Product	Rate	Term	Notice	Contact
Ordinary A/c	2.00	1.50	10-100,000	01416494555
Investment A/c	2.00	3.15	20-500	01416494555
Income Bond	5.25	3.90	2,000-24,999	01253766151
First Opt Bond	6.40	4.80	1,000-250,000	01416365558
42nd Issue Cert	8.80	5.80	100-10,000	01416365558
Yearly Plan	5.85	20-400/mth	8day	01913854800
Children's Bond	7.85	14day	1mth	01416365558
Gen Ext Rate	3.51	100-250,000	8day	01416365558
Capital Bonds	7.75	100-10,000	8day	01913854800
8th Index Unit	3.75	500-20,000	60day	01253766151
Parsons Bond	7.50	5.63	4.50	01253766151

* First £70 (£140) of net tax free, net proceeds for up to £100 * Additional charge up to £20,000 for guaranteed proceeds * Tax free * Rates gross and variable * Guaranteed when held for 5 years * 7.5% net income for £20,000 + £40,000 in addition to 51 holidays * Available but not in full

PENSION ANNUITY

All figures are the gross annual annuity (£100,000 purchase), guaranteed 5 years, paid monthly in advance

SINGLE LIFE (level ann)	Male: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Equi Life Level	£10,970	£12,040	£13,380
Can Life Level	£10,412	£11,682	£13,342
Can Life Level	£10,585	£11,710	£13,276
Sun Life Level	£10,547	£11,581	£13,257
General Level	£10,692	£11,706	£13,032

SINGLE LIFE	Female: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Royal Life Level	£9,668	£10,511	£11,731
Equitable Level	£9,933	£10,743	£11,930
Can Life Level	£9,933	£10,563	£11,776
General Level	£9,805	£10,636	£11,792
Prudential Level	£9,814	£10,538	£11,608

JOINT LIFE, 2/3 WIDOWS	Male: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Equi Life Level	£9,638	£10,507	£11,688
Can Life Level	£9,549	£10,168	£11,089
Can Life Level	£9,335	£9,970	£10,957
Prudential Level	£9,363	£9,968	£10,779
General Level	£9,463	£10,067	£10,908

Source: Annuity Direct 071 375 1175

Compiled by: Morag Preston

FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Landlord	Interest rate	Loan size	Max %	Notes
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Building Societies	2.90	to £100k	80	5.45% to 2.1.95
Barclaycard	1.50	£35-£150k	95	6.95% 6 months
0800 550547	2.24	to £150k	95	2% for 1 year
0800 550545				6-5 months then 1.75% for 1 year

Banks	3.94	£15k-150k	95	4.50% discount to 31.1.95
0132 556 8555				4.75% for 1 year
Lloyds	3.80	£80k+	95	
Local Branch				

Further lenders, larger loans and first-time buyers tables supplied by Bay's Guides Ltd. Further information: Bay's Guides, 0753 00482.

GOOD NEWS FOR HOME BUYERS! SEE BACK PAGE OF THIS SECTION.

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GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

Company	1yr	2yr	3yr	4yr	5yr	Minimum investment
Abbey Life	6.00	6.40	6.45	6.50	6.50	£25,000
AGL Life	6.25	6.70	6.75	6.80	6.80	£50,000
AGL Life	6.25	6.70	6.75	6.80	6.80	£25,000
Consolidated Life	6.25	6.70	6.75	6.80	6.80	£25,000
Can Life & Pension	6.25	6.70	6.75	6.80	6.80	£25,000
Can Life & Pension	6.25	6.70	6.75	6.80	6.80	£25,000
Can Life & Pension	6.25	6.70	6.75	6.80	6.80	£25,000
Can Life & Pension	6.25	6.70	6.75	6.80	6.80	£25,000
Can Life & Pension	6.25	6.70	6.75	6.80	6.80	£25,000
Can Life & Pension	6.25	6.70	6.75	6.80	6.80	£25,000

* Income up to £10,000 per annum. * Growth & monthly income at lower rates. * 7 years 8.00%. * Monthly income at lower rates. * Details obtainable from Nat West Life 0222 404022. * Monthly income from £10,000 to 10 years 7.00%.

Yorkshire Electricity in focus

ALL eyes were turned to Yorkshire Electricity this week, after the President of the Board of Trade decided to give the go-ahead for Traralgar House's bid for Northern Electricity.

The spotlight is now on the Swiss Bank Group, which is supporting Traralgar House in its takeover attempt. Investors have noted that, while the Swiss bank has only 3 per cent of Northern's shares, it actually

has an 8 per cent holding in Yorkshire.

Hanson has been named as a likely bidder, but a host of other names have also been mentioned. Yorkshire's shares have jumped from 81p to 87p this week. Other targets in the electricity sector include Southern (up from 82p to 87p since Monday), South Western (87p from 82p) and Midlands (78p from 75p).

FIXED RATE

Gross coupon	Gross yield	Minimum purchase
Birmingham Midshires 9.375%	9.50	100.17
Bradford & Bingley 11.25%	11.50	100.13
Bradford & Bingley 11.25%	11.50	100.13
Bradford & Bingley 11.25%	11.50	100.13
Bradford & Bingley 11.25%	11.50	100.13
Bradford & Bingley 11.25%	11.50	100.13
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Bradford & Bingley 11.25%	11.50	100.13
Bradford & Bingley 11.25%	11.50	100.13
Bradford & Bingley 11.25%	11.50	100.13

Gross coupon	Gross yield	Minimum purchase
First National 8.875%	10.00	100.00
Cheshire 8.875%	10.00	100.00

PSG = Permanent Investment-Insurance shares. Source: Moneyfacts, 071 601 0101

UNIT LINKED INSURANCE INVESTMENTS

ALDORE LIFE ASSURANCE

Unit	Value	Wtd %	Ytd %
Alldore Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Alldore Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Alldore Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Alldore Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Alldore Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00

EAGLE STAR LIFE ASSURANCE

Unit	Value	Wtd %	Ytd %
Eagle Star Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Eagle Star Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Eagle Star Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Eagle Star Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Eagle Star Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00

HENDERSON INVESTMENT

Unit	Value	Wtd %	Ytd %
Henderson Investment	100.00	1.00	1.00
Henderson Investment	100.00	1.00	1.00
Henderson Investment	100.00	1.00	1.00
Henderson Investment	100.00	1.00	1.00
Henderson Investment	100.00	1.00	1.00

SCOTTISH LIFE INVESTMENTS

Unit	Value	Wtd %	Ytd %
Scottish Life Investments	100.00	1.00	1.00
Scottish Life Investments	100.00	1.00	1.00
Scottish Life Investments	100.00	1.00	1.00
Scottish Life Investments	100.00	1.00	1.00
Scottish Life Investments	100.00	1.00	1.00

ADRIALIFE ASSURANCE

Unit	Value	Wtd %	Ytd %
Adrialife Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Adrialife Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Adrialife Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Adrialife Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Adrialife Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00

EAGLE STAR LIFE ASSURANCE

Unit	Value	Wtd %	Ytd %
Eagle Star Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Eagle Star Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
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Scottish Life Investments	100.00	1.00	1.00
Scottish Life Investments	100.00	1.00	1.00
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ALDORE LIFE ASSURANCE

Unit	Value	Wtd %	Ytd %
Alldore Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
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EAGLE STAR LIFE ASSURANCE

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SCOTTISH LIFE INVESTMENTS

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ALDORE LIFE ASSURANCE

Unit	Value	Wtd %	Ytd %
Alldore Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
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Alldore Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Alldore Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00
Alldore Life Assurance	100.00	1.00	1.00

EAGLE STAR LIFE ASS

Lenders unfair on mortgage indemnity and negative equity

From Mr P. A. Judkins
Sir, I have read with interest the letter "Relief of negative equity a priority" (Weekend Money Letters, February 4).

The problems that the negative equity trap causes families who have fast outgrown their accommodation are enormous and many of your readers may be interested to learn of a new dimension to the issue.

During the summer of 1994, we were consulted by many people with negative equity who had become aware that they had paid for a Mortgage Indemnity Guarantee Insurance policy (MIG) when they took out their mortgage. Essentially, this was an insurance policy that guaranteed a specific amount to the lender in the event that the property was worth less than the mortgage.

Our first step on taking instructions from a client was to try to obtain a copy of the MIG policy. We were surprised that, without exception, every single high street lender refused to disclose a copy of the MIG, saying that it was nothing to do with the borrower. Our initial reaction was that if this was so, then why not show it to us and if there is one thing set to raise the hackles of any lawyer it is this sort of response.

We have since managed to persuade some lenders to disclose their MIG policies to us, but there are still quite a number who, to date, are refusing to.

We have found out that one well-known lender, although charging the borrower for the MIG policy, was not, in fact, taking out the insurance. We have also discovered that other lenders seemed to have placed a different insurance than that which they implied they would be taking, for many borrowers were under the impression that the MIG (as the ordinary meaning of the words would suggest) was an insurance to cover the

borrower for a fall in house prices. These are perhaps some of the reasons why the lenders are refusing to disclose the policies.

Ironically, by not disclosing the policies, then, in the long run, the lender is potentially causing financial loss to both itself and the borrower. It encourages borrowers who are already desperate to follow risky advice to hand in their keys to the property and tell the lender to claim for all losses, including the negative equity, under the MIG policy.

We believe that, over the next few months, there will be more media exposure of this topic. We think it is quite unacceptable that the high street lenders are refusing to make clean and disclose a copy of the MIG, which, after all, the borrower has paid for.

Once the borrower has a copy, he can obtain independent advice as to what risks are covered by it and whether or not it will help him out of a negative equity situation. It would appear that the lenders ignore the contractual duty to their client, the borrower, to disclose everything relevant to the mortgage contract and seem more concerned with protecting the interests of the insurer.

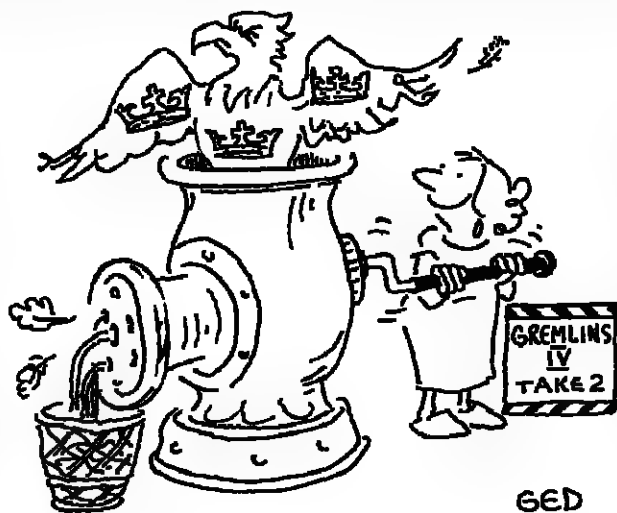
Until one sees a copy of every MIG policy, together with the mortgage terms, offer and conditions, one cannot ascertain whether a loss arising out of a sale on the open market is one of the risks covered by it. We should say that, from the MIG policies that we have seen, this seems unlikely.

However, what is not so certain is the situation where the borrower has repurchased the property and the insurance company are seeking to recover from the borrower that amount paid to the lender under the MIG. There is a growing body of legal opinion that would argue that, in these circumstances, the right of subrogation cannot apply.

One could be forgiven for concluding that had the lenders not been so willing to lend large amounts of money in the first place, house prices would not have become so inflated. It is indeed ironic that the poor borrower was made to pay for an insurance policy to protect the lender and not himself from the harsh consequences of negative equity. One must ask why it is that the MIG insurance contract was not made (as a condition of the mortgage offer) between the borrower and the insurer rather than the lender and the insurer. If it had been, many would have been spared misery.

PAUL JUDKINS,
Judkins & Co (Solicitors),
17 Bull Plain, Hertford.

Letters are welcomed, but The Times regrets it cannot always give individual replies or advice. No legal responsibility can be accepted for advice or statements in these columns and independent professional advice should be sought.



GED

Tit for tat as Barclaycard account is cut up

From Lawrie Hill
Sir, Before going on holiday last July, I requested a new Barclaycard, as mine no longer worked in the machines. Barclaycard said the speediest way to obtain it was to have it delivered to the nearest branch of Barclays. I called both before and after the holiday and the card had not arrived.

I continued to use my old card and settled the bills in full when they arrived. In January, I was amazed when an art shop said it must retain my card when I tried to use it. As my account was clear I asked the shop to contact Barclaycard. To my astonishment, the assistant, whilst talking to Barclaycard, cut up my card in front of everyone. Humiliated

and close to tears, I left the shop.

Upon contacting Barclaycard it informed me that as I had not picked up the card my account had been closed. Despite contacting me frequently with loan and other offers, it could not inform me of this. I confirmed that I also was closing my account.

Recently, however, I sent me an account for £97 as it had paid National Breakdown my annual subscription fee on direct debit. As I no longer have an account with Barclaycard, I went outside and cut up the account for all to see. Need I take any more steps?
Yours faithfully,
LAWRIE HILL,
The Nook, Hushwaite, York.

C&G members' interests should be considered as well as their money

From the Chairman, Building Societies' Members' Association

Sir, I am most unhappy with the way you have reported the fall in profits of the Cheltenham and Gloucester Building Society (February 7). "The cut-throat competition for new mortgage business has taken its toll," you write. Kindly note, C&G members, that the society has incurred £7.3 million in costs — your money — for the doubtful privilege of not yet being taken over by Lloyd's Bank.

Competition for new mortgage business is healthy. Your angle suggests that you believe that societies should make big profits — despite their purporting to support the principle of mutuality. Do you subscribe to their greed for profits?

Some of us, too few, alas, still believe that building societies should pay as much interest as possible to members, and charge as little interest as possible to borrowers. But the gap keeps on growing, profits keep on growing — and the tax on those profits keeps on growing.

Note that UBS analyst, Rob Thomas, who was a mere £30 million adrift in his profits forecast, commented: "C&G could have tried harder to maximise its profits. But the society may have felt some

pressure not to make a massive profit as there is no likelihood of Lloyds Bank increasing its valuation of C&G."

Who, seriously, can doubt that this can act against the public interest?
Yours faithfully,
JIM FRENCH,
Chairman, Building Societies' Members' Association,
3 Dell Lane, Billingshurst, West Sussex.

From A. M. Maud

Sir, As a signatory for the C&G Building Society special meeting, let me try and help its chief executive, Andrew Longhurst, to understand its purpose. It is to get him to put members first, rather than his desire to run Lloyds Bank — the dowry if he succeeds.

C&G is being sold cheaply. Best value alternatives have not been fully explored, many shareholders have been excluded due to C&G's choice of qualifying dates (including many who held accounts long before the bid was announced), and management have been arrogant. The driving force in this bid appears to be the advancement of C&G senior management, not shareholder value as it should be.

Yours faithfully,
A. M. MAUD,
Northcott House,
Hinton Waldrist, Oxfordshire.

Pension priorities back to front

From Mrs Faye Hogg
Sir, I read with interest the letter from Dr James Gibson (Weekend Money, January 14).

I was married at the age of 19, in 1948, to a serving officer in the Royal Air Force and did all I could to support him in the various duties expected of one.

When he was medically discharged, in 1972, after 30 years' distinguished service as a wing commander, he received the sum of £6,000. He died in 1976 and I

received the State widows' pension thereafter. I remarried nearly two years later and lost my pension.

When I was widowed for the second time, in 1990, I applied to have my State widows' pension reinstated. The reply stated this was not possible as I had remarried before I was 60 years of age.

I have a friend who lives in Zimbabwe and has been widowed three times, but has retained (without reservation) all her pensions earned in the United Kingdom State widows' pension as she remarried after the age of 60, though sadly that marriage ended a year after when her then husband died.

She never contributed to this country in any way as she emigrated as a young woman to the then Rhodesia. I certainly don't bear any grudge against her, it is just that the so-called system of "women's rights" have got the priorities back to front.

There must indeed be many other circumstances where women are penalised and humiliated for having done the "decent" thing and chosen marriage instead of cohabiting discreetly without being "caught out".

Yours sincerely
FAYE HOGG,
11 Clare Road,
South Benfleet,
Essex.

Why does Ernie come at a premium?

From Mr Graham Walker
Sir, Would someone please explain to me why it is no longer possible to buy Premium Bonds in less than £100 units. Surely, this mandatory and illogical restriction is against our interests. There are many people who would prefer to buy bonds rather than do the Lottery, provided they were able to buy, as they used to, in smaller amounts.

Imposing a limit of £100 is yet another, unnecessary, imposition on the rights of the less affluent members of society.

Yours sincerely,
GRAHAM P. WALKER,
13 Dorchester Road,
Up Holland, Lancashire.



Don't be surprised if you strike it lucky with Premium Bonds.

Because every month there's a

guaranteed £1 million jackpot, plus two prizes of £100,000, three of £50,000 and four of £25,000.

And with others ranging from £50 to £10,000 it means there are over 300,000 prizes to be won monthly with a total value of over £20 million.

What's more, they're all tax-free.

You can invest any sum from £100 to £20,000 in multiples of £10. Remember, the more Bonds you hold the more chances you have of winning the guaranteed monthly £1 million jackpot. Especially as your Premium Bonds are entered into the draw month after month after month. And don't worry, you can pull out anytime and still get all your money back.

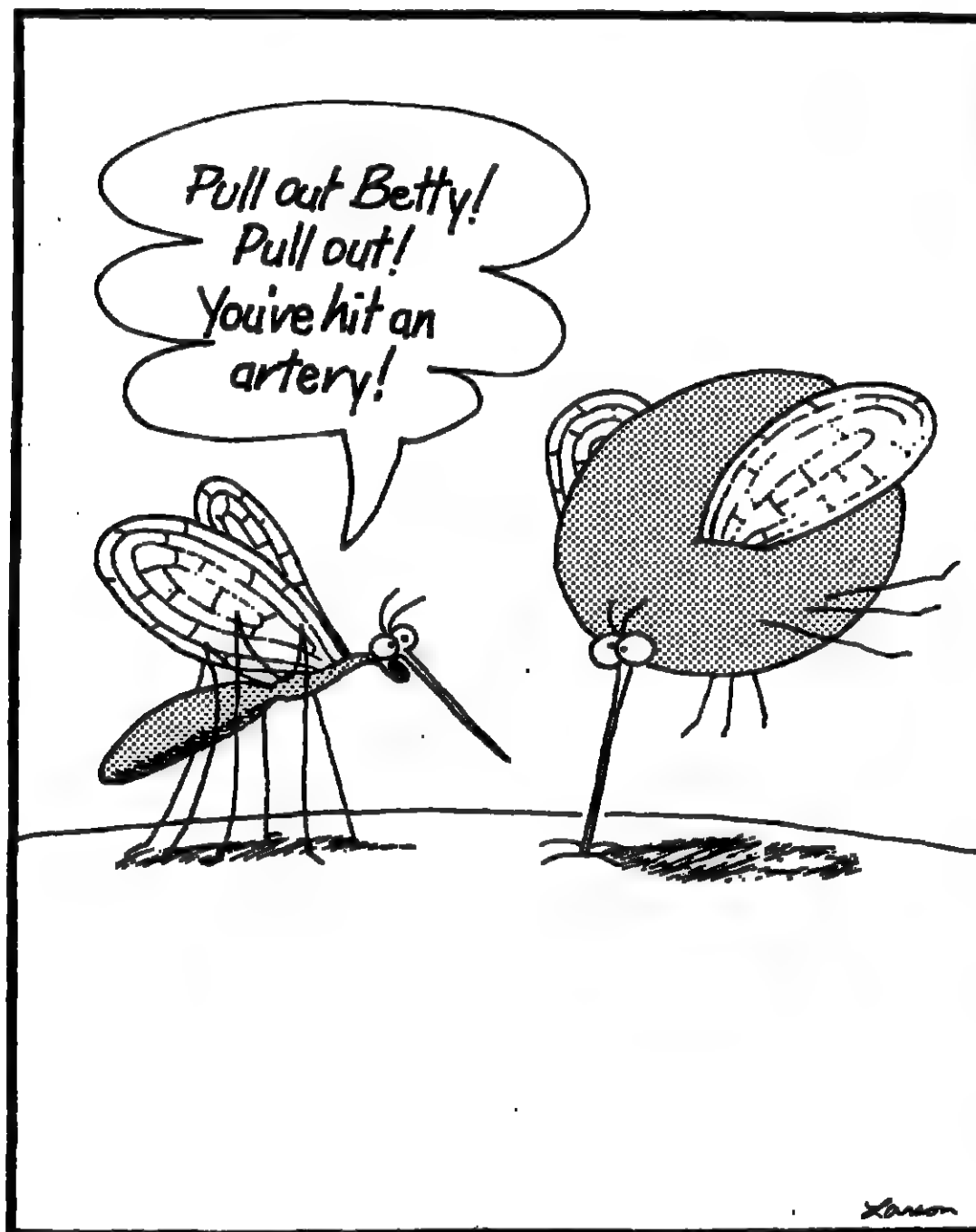
Use the form below to buy Premium Bonds by post. We pay the postage.

Your cheque should be crossed "A/C Payee" and made payable to "NATIONAL SAVINGS (PREMIUM BONDS)" using CAPITAL letters for this part of the cheque.

Please write your name and address on the back of the cheque. Post your completed application form and cheque to National Savings (Premium Bonds), Freepost BJ 2092, Blackpool, Lancashire FY0 1BR. If you prefer, use a first class stamp for rapid delivery.

If, before applying, you would like further information and a Prospectus, pick up a Premium Bonds sales booklet at your post office where you can also buy your Premium Bonds. Or call us free, 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 0500 500 000 and we will send you a sales booklet.

Premium Bonds are sold subject to the terms of the current Prospectus. We give three months notice of any changes to the prize structure and the underlying interest rate that makes up the prize fund, which is currently 5.2%pa tax-free. Any person aged 16 or over can buy Bonds for themselves. Bonds can be bought for children under 16 by their parents, (great) grandparents, or guardians. If you buy by post, once we have accepted your application we will send you your Premium Bonds together with a copy of the Prospectus, normally within a month. The purchase date will be the date we receive your application. If on receiving your Premium Bonds and Prospectus you wish to cancel your purchase tell us in writing within 28 days and we will refund your money. Your Bonds will go into the prize draws after you have held them for one calendar month following the month of purchase. The Director of Savings reserves the right to seek evidence of identity when you want to purchase or ask for repayment of Premium Bonds.



Someone hits the £1 million Premium Bonds Jackpot every month.

Please send this form to: National Savings, PREMIUM BONDS, FREEPOST BJ 2092, Blackpool, Lancs FY0 1BR. C O U

1 Do you already hold Premium Bonds? (Please tick) Yes ☐ No ☐
If yes, please enter your Holder's Number

2 Amount in words _____ pounds £ _____ Minimum £100. Larger amounts must be in multiples of £10.

3 M. _____ Surname _____
(Mr Mrs Miss Ms)
All forenames _____
Address in full _____
Postcode _____ Date of birth _____ Day _____ Month _____ Year _____

4 I accept the purchase will be subject to the terms of the current Prospectus.
Signature _____ Date _____

5 If buying for a child under 16, give name of parent/guardian:
M. _____ Surname _____
(Mr Mrs Miss Ms)
All forenames _____

6 If buying for a (great) grandchild, give name of the parent/guardian above and your own name and address below.
M. _____ Surname _____
(Mr Mrs Miss Ms)
All forenames _____
Address _____
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NATIONAL SAVINGS
SECURITY HAS NEVER BEEN SO INTERESTING.

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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

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TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place ten business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

[illegible]

TO:

Uranus Collonges can tower above rivals

CHEPSTOW

100: With Jim Old's string back to form, St Mellion Fairway can step up on his previous hurdle form to collect here. A leading bumper horse last year when he won on soft and heavy going, he is highly regarded by his trainer. My Rossini is the form choice judged on three solid performances, including his defeat of Challenger Du Luc at Haydock six weeks ago. Rosmarino will relish the conditions.

130: Petosku is best going left-handed and relishes the mud, as he showed when winning at Cheltenham last Saturday. The step back in trip should not be a worry in this ground. Spuffington's best form has been on better going and the mud-loving Hops And Pops looks the main danger.

200: Nick The Beak was having his fifth race in little more than two months when disappointing last time at Cheltenham and after a break, he should be thereabouts on this ground. However, Sun Surfer was a shade unlucky when beaten at Warwick 11 days ago, having been checked on the home turn before staying on strongly. That good effort followed a three-month rest and he won on the heavy going last year.

NEWCASTLE

230: Valiant Warrior, an in-form course and distance winner. Is just preferred in a particularly competitive



TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

handicap. His latest victory was boosted by the subsequent success of a runner 20 lengths away in third. Armagret is extremely well treated, running off a mark 21lb below that when winning at Ayr last April. However, his best form is over further, which is also true of the progressive Unguided Missile.

300: Anadale is likely to be a warm favourite after an eye-catching run over an inadequate trip on his seasonal reappearance at Wetherby recently. Len Lungo's hope is sure to run well but Home Counties could offer some each-way value. After staying on resolutely behind the well-handicapped Amigos and Express Gift on his last two runs, he steps up in trip, but has won over a quarter-mile shorter. Mr Knitwit should go well.

335: Uranus Collonges is 6lb out of the handicap, but Jimmy Fitzgerald's giant chaser is strongly fancied to complete a treble. The out-and-out stayer should appreciate this marathon trip and the stiff finish. Tartan Tyrant,

winner of his last five completed starts, is a big danger but top weight could tell over this extended four miles. Arthur's Minstrel bounced back to form at Wetherby last time and has won four times here, but is far from certain to stay this distance.

410: High Altitude boasts the best form, having been fourth at Market here last month, but is without a win for two seasons and is worth opposing. Countourous was on his seasonal reappearance but that was over an extra mile and Wake Up can go one better after a promising chasing debut behind Newlands-General.

440: Jalcanto needed his latest run after a four month lay-off and Mary Reilly's Flat handicapper is open to further improvement over hurdles. The progressive Oat



Old: Chepstow chance

Couture must overcome a double penalty after two wins, while the useful House Captain has not raced for 87 days, which leaves Greville Again as the main threat.

NOTTINGHAM

245: If Majorbox Yafcoz reproduces the form which saw him finish a good second to Supreme Master at Ascot ten days ago, he should oblige here. Major Yafcoz was a poor race in the mud here last month and David Nicholson's Zaitoon looks a bigger threat. Our Main Man makes his hurdles debut after showing decent bumper form last time.

320: See facing page.

355: The front-running Arabian Bold should ensure a sound pace and see it up for Large Action as Oliver Sherwood's Champion Hurdle fancy has his final racecourse work out before going to Cheltenham.

Richard Evans

WINDSOR

THUNDERER
1.50 Brandon Prince, 2.25 Oneupmanship, 2.55 Kinsar, 3.25 Zeta's Lad, 4.00 Dwidem, 4.30 Squire Sir.

GOING: HEAVY SIS

1.50 KINS JOHN MOVIES HURDLE (22.907: 2m 110yd) (8 runners)

1. 6 AND WHAT ELSE 133 C Chas 6-11-0 M Barry (7)
2. 10 BYE BUSTER 107 F 6-11-0 M Barry (7)
3. 10 BRABBLE BUCK 107 F 6-11-0 M Barry (7)
4. 4322 BRANCO PRINCE 107 F 6-11-0 M Barry (7)
5. 6000 COPPER BOY 107 F 6-11-0 M Barry (7)
6. 6000 COPPER BOY 107 F 6-11-0 M Barry (7)
7. 6000 COPPER BOY 107 F 6-11-0 M Barry (7)
8. 6000 COPPER BOY 107 F 6-11-0 M Barry (7)

2.25 MAGNA CARTA MOVIES CHASE (22.912: 2m 5f) (6 runners)

1. 384 CAMBO 50 (6.5) M 6-11-0 M Barry (7)
2. 384 CAMBO 50 (6.5) M 6-11-0 M Barry (7)
3. 384 CAMBO 50 (6.5) M 6-11-0 M Barry (7)
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5. 384 CAMBO 50 (6.5) M 6-11-0 M Barry (7)
6. 384 CAMBO 50 (6.5) M 6-11-0 M Barry (7)

COURSE SPECIALISTS

THUNDERER: C 2000, 4 winners from 18 runners, 22.2% a 100, 8. 11. 14. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 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By DAVID POWELL
ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

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BOXING 45

BRUNO DISMISSIVE
OF CHALLENGE
BY PUERTO RICAN

SPORT

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 18 1995

SIMON BARNES 46

RALLY BACKERS
DEMAND RACE TO
THE FINNISH

England's World Cup plans arrive at Cardiff crossroads



Guscott, the England centre, makes the most of the friendly foe in Cardiff yesterday before hostilities begin against Wales today. Photograph: Barry Batchelor

Wales to provide sternest test

BY DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

EACH step on rugby union's five nations' championship road leads remorselessly to the World Cup this summer. It is Wales' misfortune that, in turn, they have faced two of the favourites for that competition and have lost. Today, in Cardiff, they face a third, England, and stand in danger of losing once more.

When they played South Africa in November, Wales emerged from defeat with credit. They had found a tight five which even England concede is of formidable quality.

Yet, against France in Paris last month they derived little benefit, and, given the control which England have exercised in beating Ireland and France, Wales can enter the Arms Park in the Scottish Life International today only as second favourites.

"That is a situation they will relish. It's a great game for us to go into as massive underdogs," Robert Norster, the

team manager, said. He, of all people, need not remind England of their dire record in Cardiff, and the remark of Clive Rowlands, his predecessor, has passed into legend.

Asked after heavy defeat by New Zealand in the semi-finals of the 1987 World Cup what was left for Wales, Rowlands grinned and said: "We go back to beating England."

England, however, have won four of the last five encounters, and three defeats in a row this season would beg questions of Welsh morale. Conversely, victory would bring England to the brink of a grand slam and a potential cash bonus as the amateur concept sinks slowly in the south.

As the Australian Rugby Union confirmed yesterday player contracts that are capable of leaving their leading players £40,000 better off, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) believes that England squad members can take up to £15,000 from their rugby fame if they can sustain their success.

Promotional activities are already expected to earn England players £10,000 this season, and Malcolm Phillips, the chairman of the RFU's joint working party with the players, believes that an elite sponsor can be attracted after the World Cup.

"We believe there is a greater potential for earning capacity later in the year and we are hopeful that the rewards can reach £15,000," Phillips said.

Australia's players will study. In training camp in Brisbane this weekend, the contracts in which their responsibilities to the union and to sponsors are outlined.

"I don't think this will turn the game professional," Rod McCall, the Queensland lock, said. "It's just a small step along the way. It's also a way for the union to finally guarantee their investment in players."

It is hard to know what McCall might consider a worthwhile professional return, but Phillips stressed, on England's part, that "the sums we are talking about represent

reward for considerable effort and are not amounts a player would leave his job for. That is something we want to avoid."

The players may remain nominal amateurs, but they are hedged round with professionalism, in their individual and collective preparation. Wales represent the job in hand, but plans are also to dispatch observers to South America, South Africa and Italy, to watch the opponents that England will meet in the World Cup's pool B in Durban.

No Welshman, though, would seek a win bonus for grinding English faces into the

mud. That is part of the Welsh rugby player's birthright, but if they are to do so, they have first to sustain lineup parity — or better — in the duel between the two 6ft 10in giant policemen, Derwyn Jones and Martin Bayfield, and then use the tactical awareness of Robert Jones on his fifth appearance for his country.

Nigel Davies reflected the upbeat mood of his countrymen when he insisted that Wales must "play the game on our own terms". That may be easier said than done on a muddy pitch (both teams trained yesterday amid vicious hail storms) and against England's marauding back row.

"The only way to stop them is by very aggressive gain-line tackling," Alan Davies, the Wales coach, said, which is why the return of Hemi Taylor at flanker has been greeted with such relief.

Of all England's opponents, Wales will surely test the back three — Mike Catt and the Underwood brothers — to a far greater degree than Ireland and France did. Catt's defensive duties have been incredibly light so far, but he will expect the Wales half backs to make up for that if, as Nigel Davies hopes, Wales can carry the game to the enemy.

Even if they do, can they score tries, rather than rely on the goal-kicking of Neil Jenkins?

That used to be the charge levelled at England, but not this season. Their return in

Cardiff — nine in the past 30 years — may be nothing to write home about, but this season they have amassed 18 tries in four internationals with a variety in their playing style which has allowed them to miss several more gilded opportunities.

These have been embellished by the direction brought to the game by Rob Andrew and his goal-kicking. Andrew, 32 today, stands 11 short of Jonathan Webb's England record of 296 career points. He may not achieve that target this afternoon, but victory would be a more-than-adequate birthday present.

FIVE NATIONS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	2	2	0	0	51	18	4
Scotland	1	1	0	0	26	13	4
France	2	1	0	1	31	40	4
Wales	1	0	0	1	21	0	0
Ireland	2	0	0	2	21	46	0

RESULTS: Ireland 8 England 20; France 21 Wales 9; England 31 France 10; Scotland 25 Ireland 13.

FOCUS: Today, Wales v England, France v Scotland, March 4; Scotland v Wales, Ireland v France, March 18; England v Scotland, Wales v Ireland.

FORM GUIDE: Wales v England: Of 100 meetings Wales have won 46, England 40 and there have been 12 draws. Of 49 matches played on Welsh soil since 1983, England have won 14, the last in 1991.

France v Scotland: In 65 matches France have won 32, Scotland 30 and three have been drawn. Of 32 matches played on French soil since 1911, Scotland have won nine, the last in 1962.

Captain on guard 1
Rodder portrait 46
Battle for Hastings 47
Prop ploughs on 47

Injury likely to shorten Graf's glittering career

Stuart Jones, tennis correspondent, says that fitness worries could force the best woman player into early retirement

Even if Steffi Graf regains her status as the world's leading player by capturing the Open Gaz de France title tomorrow, as is expected, her supremacy in women's tennis has perhaps already been drawn to a close. Her career could be over even sooner than had been thought.

An informed and respected source within the Women's Tennis Association Tour disclosed in Paris that the back injury sustained by Graf last year may lead to her premature retirement. Returning from an absence of five months, apart from one brief outing in New York, Graf, at the age of 25, has effectively embarked on a last hurrah.

Bombarded by questions about her physical condition this week, Graf has insisted that she is feeling no adverse effects from the bone spur in her lower spine. No, she has not needed to adjust her game; yes, she can swing freely; no, she cannot sense any restriction of movement.

Nevertheless, in declining to undergo an operation that would put her out for at least another six months and carries no guarantee of a complete cure, she runs the risk of being afflicted by referred complaints. Her body would inevitably attempt to compensate for the original problem.

A pulled calf muscle, which forced her to miss the Australian Open last month, may not have been the consequence merely of over-zealous training. "My deepest concern," she said, after admitting to a drop in her level of concentration and a lack of "practice," "is my health and fitness."

For as long as she manages to maintain her customary standard, Graf will remain a force. Given her psychological reservations about her well-being, though, she can scarcely expect to recapture the conviction she demonstrated little more than a year ago when, for the second time in her life, she was the holder of the four grand slam titles.

She has since lost all of them — the French and US Open to Arantxa Sánchez Vicario, Wimbledon to Conchita Martínez, and the Australian Open to Mary Pierce. Suffering from what

was initially reported to be a stress fracture in her back, she reached only one final.

So clear was Graf's lead in the convoluted ranking system that she was poised only a fortnight ago for Sánchez Vicario. As the runner-up in Melbourne, there can be little dispute that the pugnacious Spaniard earned the honour, however briefly she retains it, during Graf's enforced hibernation.

Although Graf professes to be pursuing "personal satisfaction" rather than accumulating trophies, the grand slam championships have been, are, and always will be used as virtually the only gauge by which players are rated. With 15, the German already has her place as the fifth most successful woman in history. At present, there is only one competitor who seems re-



Graf: great champion

motely capable of surpassing her feats — and that prospect lies far in the future.

She is, as Graf herself indicated after she had beaten her in Paris on Thursday night, Martina Hingis. Once the 14-year-old Swiss has developed her slender, psychological reservations about her well-being, though, she can scarcely expect to recapture the conviction she demonstrated little more than a year ago when, for the second time in her life, she was the holder of the four grand slam titles.

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CARDIFF TEAMS

WALES		ENGLAND	
A Clement (Swansea)	15	M J Catt (Bath)	15
I C Evans (Llanelli)	14	T Underwood (Leicesters)	14
M Taylor (Pontypool)	13	W D C Carling (Hartpools)	13
N G Davies (Llanelli)	12	J C Gurnood (Bath)	12
N Walker (Cardiff)	11	R Underwood (Leicester/RAF)	11
N R Jenkins (Pontypool)	10	C R Andrew (Wasps)	10
R N Jones (Swansea)	9	K P P Bracken (Bristol)	9
M Griffiths (Cardiff)	8	J Leonard (Harewood)	8
G R Jenkins (Swansea)	7	B C Moore (Harewood)	7
J D Davies (Neath)	6	V E Ubogu (Bath)	6
H T Taylor (Cardiff)	5	T A K Rodder (Northampton/Army)	5
D Jones (Cardiff)	4	M O Johnson (Leicester)	4
G O Llewellyn (Neath)	3	M C Bayfield (Northampton)	3
R G Collins (Pontypool)	2	B B Clarke (Bath)	2
E W Lewis (Cardiff)	1	D Richards (Leicester)	1

Replacements: 16 M Back (Bridgend), 17 R H SJ B Moon (Llanelli), 18 S Davies (Swansea), 19 P T Davies (Llanelli), 20 H Williams-Jones (Llanelli), 21 R C McBrayde (Llanelli)

Replacements: 16 J E B Callard (Bath), 17 P R de Glanville (Bath), 18 C D Morris (Cardiff), 19 S O Ojomot (Bath), 20 R G R Dave (Bath), 21 G C Rowntree (Leicesters)

Referee: D Meré (France)

De Wolf's pride 44
Form guide 44

absence may mean a first start for Anthony Yeboah, possibly as the only forward in a 4-5-1 formation, but Wilkinson does not intend to reveal his hand until the last moment.

Ferguson is also considering his options, although the return to fitness of Hughes and the end of Keane's suspension leaves him with a strong hand, unless anyone else goes down with the virus that once brought back from his England duty in Dublin.

"It will be nice to get back to playing football again and to demonstrate the game is not in

the negative slough that comments this week suggest," Alex Ferguson, the United manager, said yesterday. "The fact that it's a cup-tie with a big Leeds following should mean there's a good atmosphere."

There should still be plenty of rivals to challenge last year's winners from Old Trafford, with Newcastle United, Liverpool and Tottenham Hotspur all enjoying home advantage this time.

Tottenham have a difficult tie with Southampton, who have drawn eight of their last ten games. Benali returns from suspension, but Southampton's hopes of an upset may rest more on what mood Le Tissier has returned from Dublin in.

Newcastle, who are the joint-favourites with Manchester United and Tottenham, meet Manchester City, who they have yet to beat this season. Brian Horton, the City manager, has said that St James' Park is his lucky

ground, a point proved when City won there against the odds in the Coca-Cola Cup before Christmas — the only team to do so for 13 months — but, on form and logic, tomorrow should be the day when Horton's luck runs out, even though City are strengthened by the return of Tony Cotton.

Liverpool have visitors from Selhurst Park for the second time in four days and will be even more pleased this time with a one-goal win against Wimbledon, who have proved not so much difficult opponents as downright cantankerous ones.

Wimbledon's landlords, Crystal Palace, have Dowie and Armstrong back for their game at Watford. If a team outside the top ten are to win the trophy, Everton may find a few backers at 14-1, but they are the sort of side everybody else will be happy to avoid if they account for Norwich City at Goodison Park this afternoon.

Wilkinson is glad to put pressure to one side

BY PETER BALL



Wilkinson: hoping to oust Cup-holders

"THE league is a job of work, the FA Cup is an enjoyable day out," Howard Wilkinson, the Leeds United manager, said yesterday. "The Cup is like playing roulette with a lot of money — if you keep backing red, sooner or later it will come up."

Not always. Two of the game's greatest and most successful managers — Brian Clough and Bob Paisley — failed to win the game's most important knockout competition, and so far, the only red to come up for Wilkinson has been the red of Manchester United, who provide the opposition for Leeds tomorrow in the fifth round, the furthest they have progressed in the competition since Wilkinson became their manager in 1988.

United have proved a considerable obstacle for the Yorkshire team in recent years. Leeds claimed their first win over their most bitter

rivals under Wilkinson only in September, when they won 2-1 at Elland Road in the FA Carling Premiership. That, at least, should remove an important psychological block.

"If omens mean anything, we are having a season of firsts, winning at Highbury and Selhurst Park for the first time, doing the double over Arsenal, beating United for the first time," Wilkinson said. "Going into the game knowing that we have beaten them once has to be better than knowing we had never beaten them."

"But United are favourites, and rightly so. They are at home. They won't have Cantona or Cole, but over the past four years, they have proved their mettle at the sharp end in the Premiership and other competitions."

Leeds will miss Palmer and Deane, whose height has been an important part of their attacking plan in their unbeaten run this year. Deane's



De Wolf's pride 44
Form guide 44

absence may mean a first start for Anthony Yeboah, possibly as the only forward in a 4-5-1 formation, but Wilkinson does not intend to reveal his hand until the last moment.

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PROPERTY




Revealed: the house where Buccaneers star
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CHOICE



Keep the children busy over half term
Pages 2 and 19
PLUS: A church service for clowns, page 2

GARDENING



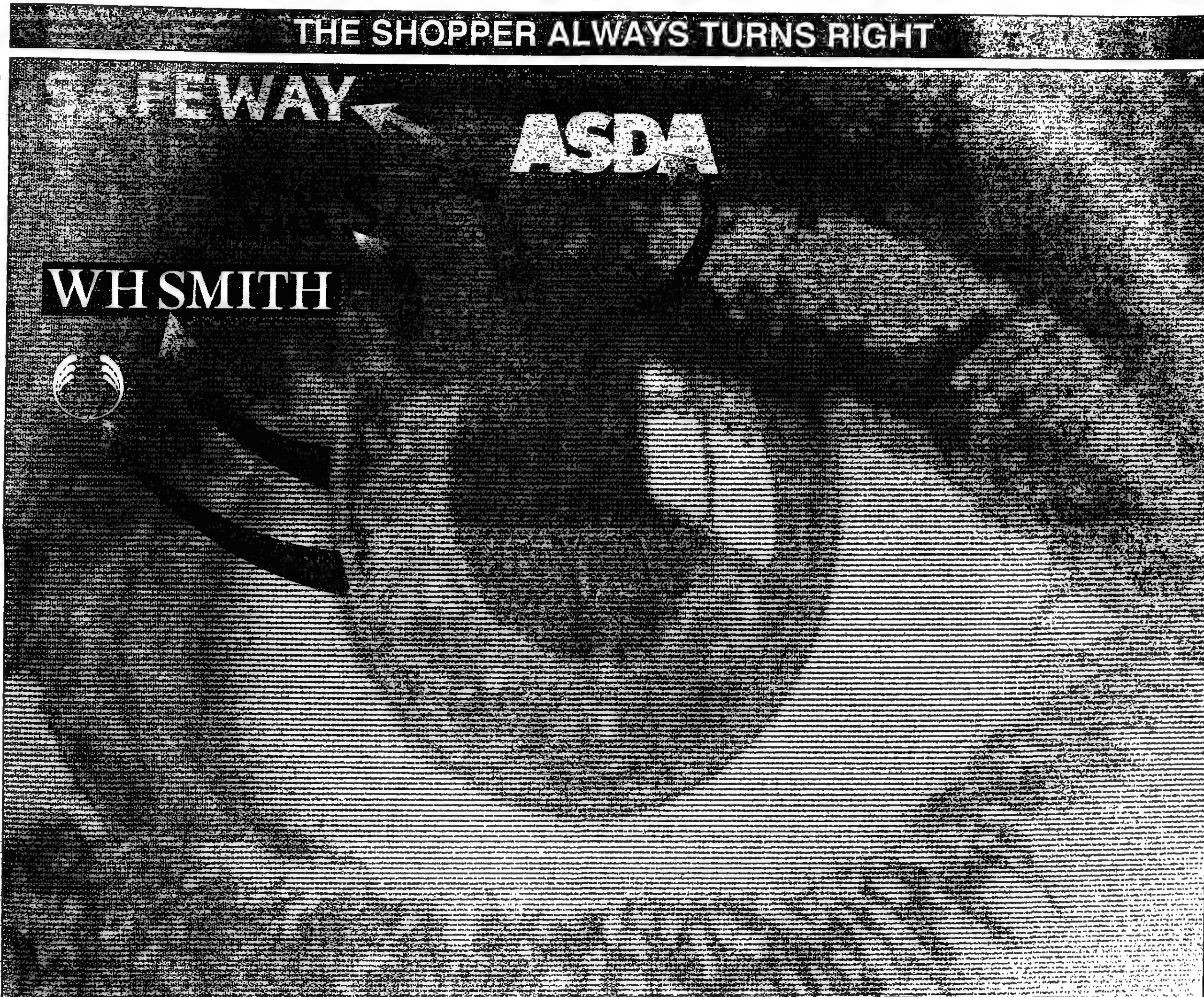
Why Britons still love their allotments
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PLUS: Spring bulbs for your garden, page 10

TRAVEL



Sight seeing India on a cricket tour
Page 17
PLUS: Provence for painters, page 18

WEEKEND



THE SHOPPER ALWAYS TURNS RIGHT

To those of us for whom shopping is a chore, it seems perverse actually to enjoy it. But shopping, the market researchers say, has become the number one leisure activity in Britain, and shopping centres are fast becoming the natural habitat of modern man. At Britain's biggest — the MetroCentre in Gateshead which is now up for sale at an estimated £300 million to £500 million — coaches roll up at the rate of 8,000 a year, some from hundreds of miles away. Last year the centre attracted 26.8 million shoppers. And a pursuit that has turned Gateshead, of all places, into a tourist attraction cannot be easily dismissed.

Three American social scientists who studied behaviour in American shopping malls identified four types of shopper. The minimalists dash in and out, neither eating, browsing, nor socialising — shoppers who try to get the whole business over as quickly and

By Nigel Hawkes

as inexpensively as possible (I can identify with this); traditionalists shop heavily but do little else. Grazers spend ages browsing, eating, and impulse purchasing, while enthusiasts, the most active of the mall denizens, do it all. The four groups are more or less equal in size.

What of those who are "just looking"? The

psychologists have a name for this, as well: it's called "experiential consumption". More than 60 per cent of those they interviewed for a study reported in the *Journal of Retailing* last March engaged in a range of activities best described as browsing. "Mall inhabitants consume the mall as well as the objects offered within it," they concluded.

Supermarkets, too, seem to encourage particular behaviour patterns. Let's walk into a typical modern one and see how it works.

The chances are that we'll turn right at the door — psychologists say that human beings have a predisposition to turn right on entering closed spaces, even if they are left-handed. That's why many purpose-built supermarkets have their doors on the left.

The first thing to strike the eye will be fresh fruit and vegetables, products that are oddly cheering, even to people who don't eat

Continued on page 3, col 1



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ROCK

David Sinclair

BELLY: Their new album, *King*, is a winner, and, in concert, the combination of Tanya Donelly's stirring vocals, Thomas Gorman's jangly guitar parts, drummer Christopher Gorman's driving rhythms and bassist Gail Greenwood's energetic stage moves proves equally difficult to resist. **Pyramids Centre, Portsmouth** (01705 826660), Feb 23; **Anson Rooms, Bristol** (0117 9299008), Feb 24; **Trent University, Nottingham** (0115 9528800), Feb 25; **Manchester Academy** (0161-275 3930), Feb 26; **Institute, Birmingham** (0121-643 6103), Feb 27; **UEA, Norwich** (01603 505401), Mar 1; **Metropolitan University, Leeds** (0113 2430171), Mar 2; **Sheffield University** (0114 2753300), Mar 3; **Newcastle University** (0191-232 8402), Mar 4; **The Plaza, Glasgow** (0141-423 3077), Mar 5; **Shepherds Bush Empire, London W12** (0181-740 7474), Mar 18.

CHUCK BERRY: Despite his regrettable taste in shirts and a tendency to churn out the old hits as if punching the clock on a production line, Chuck Berry — now a nimble 68-year-old — remains the guardian of one of the central repertoires of rock 'n' roll. **Grand, London SW11** (0171-738 9000), Feb 24; **Forum, London NW5** (0171-384 2200), Feb 25; **Cliffs Pavilion, Southend-on-Sea** (01702 351135), Feb 26; **Guildhall, Portsmouth** (01705 824353), Feb 27; **Colston Hall, Bristol** (0117 9262957), Feb 28; **De Montfort Hall, Leicester** (0116 2333111), Mar 1; **Barbican, York** (01904 656688), Mar 3; **Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow** (0141-333 6633), Mar 3; **Lakeside Country Club, Camberley** (01252 836464), Mar 4; **Crawley Leisure Centre** (01293 553636), Mar 5; **St Georges Hall, Bradford** (01274 752000), Mar 6; **Southport Theatre** (01704 540404), Mar 7; **Usher Hall, Edinburgh** (0131-228 1164), Mar 8; **Capitol, Aberdeen** (01224 583141), Mar 9; **National Stadium, Dublin** (010 3531 453371), Mar 10; **Maysfield Leisure Centre, Belfast** (01232 241633), March 11.

JAZZ

Clive Davis

OFFICIUM: For years the Norwegian saxophonist Jan Garbarek trod his own path, far from the jazz mainstream, as he helped to create the distinctive windswept soundscapes of the ECM label. Was there a more unlikely success last year than his meeting with the classical vocal quartet, The Hilliard Ensemble? Transcending categories, their interpretation of works, including the *Officium defunctorum* by the 16th-century composer Cristóbal de Morales, was welcomed by critics and public alike. Back in harness, the artists now embark on their first joint British tour. **Salford Cathedral** (01722 320333), Mon 20, 8pm; **Festival Hall, South Bank, London SE1** (0171-928 8800), Tues 21, 8pm; **Southwell Minster, Nottingham** (0115 941974/948262), Wed 22, 8pm; **Metropolitan Cathedral, Liverpool** (0151-709 3789), Thur 23; **Symphony Hall, Birmingham** (0121-212 3333), Sat 25.

JESSICA WILLIAMS: Better late than never, Jessica Williams is being welcomed into the inner circle of American pianists. Dave Brubeck can be counted among her champions, and provided liner notes for last year's release on Hep. **In The Pocket.**

Royal Northern College of Music, Oxford Rd, Manchester (0161-273 6283), tonight, 7.30pm; **Holywell Music Room, Holywell St, Oxford** (01893 702748), tomorrow, 8pm; **Town Hall, Cheltenham** (01242 526900), Tues 21, 8pm; **Blue Note, Hoxton Square, London N1** (0171-259 8440), Wed 22, 8.30pm; **Pizza Express, Maidstone, Kent** (01622 753162), Fri 24, 7.30pm; **Piper Club, Hull** (01482 492868), Mar 1, 8pm; **Darlington Arts Centre, Darlington** (01325 483271), Mar 3; **Brodie Country Fair, near Nairn, Scotland** (01807 4 55362), Mar 4, 8.15pm; **Corner House Hotel, Newcastle upon Tyne** (0191-265 9602), Mar 5, 8pm; **Lemon Tree Arts Centre, Aberdeen** (01224 642230), Mar 7, 7.30pm.

CLASSICAL

Richard Morrison

LAST TIPPETT: When a great composer says "this will be my last ever orchestral work" there will inevitably be sadness. But in the case of Sir Michael Tippett, 90 last month, that sentiment is overwhelmed by the high hopes held out for *The Rose Lake*, which is premiered by the London Symphony Orchestra under Sir Colin Davis's direction, and will surely be the highlight of the Barbican's Tippet festival. The title is straightforwardly descriptive, referring to an African lake that turns the "colour of pink roses" at sunset. Also in this concert is some of Tippett's most accessible orchestral music: the *Ritual Dances from The Midsummer Marriage*. **Barbican, London EC2** (0171-638 8891), tomorrow, 7.30pm. (2)



Belly, fronted by vocalist Tanya Donelly, left, hits the road for an extensive, nationwide concert tour beginning on February 23

YSAYE ON THE EAR: I am not sure why the Wigmore Hall is devoting innumerable concerts over the next week to music written or inspired by the great 19th-century violin virtuoso Eugène Ysaÿe. But the series, beginning today with a concert by the Chilingirian Quartet (7.30pm), should open a window on one of the most intense periods of creativity in musical history. Ysaÿe's circle included Fauré, Saint-Saëns, Messiaen and Debussy. A feast for lovers of French romantic music. **Wigmore Hall, Wigmore St, London W1** (0171-935 2141), daily to Sat 25.

OPERA

Rodney Milnes

OBERTO: Verdi's first opera, with John Tomlinson celebrating his debut as a producer by directing himself in the title role, was launched by Opera North just before Christmas, and is now touring around the country. For all its occasional crudities it is a fascinating piece, with enough pointers to the mature Verdi both musically and in subject matter —

fraught family relationships — to keep opera-lovers on the qui vive. Tomlinson is well cast as the stern paterfamilias, and there is vivid support from Rita Cullis, Linda Finnie and David Maxwell Anderson. David Porcelijn conducts with appropriate vigour. **Theatre Royal, Theatre Square, Nottingham** (0115 948 2620), tonight, 7.15pm; **Hull New Theatre, Kingston Square, Hull** (01482 226655), Tues 21, 7.15pm.

DER ROSENKAVLIER: Two casts available at Covent Garden next week, or three or four given the rate at which roles have been falling the first one. But never mind, the ardent conductor, Andrew Davis and the silver-voiced Barbara Bonney (Sophie) are constant factors. On Monday, Felicity Lott, Anne Sofie von Otter and Aage Haugland give their last performances, and on Friday, Anna Tomowa-Sintow (Karajan's Marschallin), Ann Murray (Octavian in Salzburg, Munich and Vienna) and Kurt Moll's classically genial Ochs take over. How happy would I be with either. **Royal Opera House, Bow St, London WC2** (0171-304 4000), Mon 20, Fri 24, 6.30pm. (2)

MUSEUMS

John Russell Taylor

UNLACED GRACE: The historic presence of the Spencers' corset factory in Banbury must have had something to do with the idea of this locally devised exhibition, which will be touring the south from May to November. There is an element of historic retrospect, but the development of the corset, but essentially it consists of fantastic variations on the corset especially created by the ceramic sculptor Michael Brennan-Wood and the fashion designer Vivienne Westwood. The results look something like fun, sometimes like torture and always more like sculpture than clothing. **Banbury Museum, 8 Horsefair, Banbury** (01295 259855), Tues-Sat, 10am-4.30pm, until April 30. (2)

THE ROAD FROM 1945: Now that the 50th anniversary of VE day is looming we no doubt have to prepare ourselves to celebrate the post-Second World War age of austerity, too. A visit to this show would be a useful form of initiation. All the leading figures of the first

post-war Labour Government are there in portraits by artists ranging from James Gurn (Clement Attlee) to Henri Cartier-Bresson (Aneurin Bevan), while the opposition is portrayed by Graham Sutherland in an oil sketch for his long destroyed portrait of Sir Winston Churchill. The more cultural side appears in a group of people involved with the Festival of Britain, all photographed by Norman Parkinson, a group of young anglers (Osborne, Behan, Lucian Freud) photographed by Daniel Farson, and even Elizabeth Taylor by Karsh of Ottawa.

National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, London WC2 (0171-306 0055), Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2-6pm, until June 18.

GALLERIES

Richard Cork

IN AWE OF THE PAWNBROKER: During the early 1980s, Bill Woodrow emerged as a leading British sculptor. He used battered washing machines or car doors, but also made surprising images of his own with metal stripped from

these ready-made objects. His latest sculpture reveals an ambitious and dramatic change. Five outside bronze rings resting on cushions, attached with chains to a central pillar, all contain references to pawnbroking. Throughout this sculpture, Woodrow's concern with the greed and privation in British society is powerfully conveyed. **Oriel, The Friary, Cardiff** (01222 395548), until Sat 25.

MAKE BELIEVE: An apt title for a mixed, international show of contemporary artists exploring ideas about fiction and falsehood. The exhibition has been selected by 13 enterprising graduate students from the college's MA course in Visual Arts Administration. Whatever the problems may have been in agreeing on a list of artists, the outcome is coherent as well as varied. Gillian Wearing's video installation, in a darkened room, concentrates on people who play out fantasies about becoming rock guitarists. Jacqueline Donachie adopts a tantalising approach, with loudspeakers offering extracts from a festive dinner she held for the 13 curators. A lively, questioning and professionally staged show, which makes ingenious use of the galleries at their disposal. **Royal College of Art, Kensington Gore, London SW7** (0171-584 5020), until Sun 26. (2)

THEATRE

Benedict Nightingale

KILLER JOE: A deserved transfer for Tracy Letts's slice of shabby-gothic — a comedy about a family that hires a hitman to dispose of one of its members. Imagine a blend of Quentin Tarantino and Sam Shepard, and you have the darkly funny feel. **Vaudeville, Strand, London WC2** (0171-836 9987), From Tue 21 at 8pm; no matinees.

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI: On opening night, Philip Frank's revival of Webster's grimiest, gaudiest play needed a few extra sparks; but with Juliet Stevenson as the lovelorn victim, and Simon Russell Beale as her volupine brother, the basic voltage is well in place. **Greenwich Theatre, Crooms Hill, London SE10** (0181-858 7755), Evenings at 7.45pm; matinees, Saturdays at 2.30pm. (2)

• More theatre, page 6.

FILMS

Geoff Brown

BANDIT QUEEN (18): Shekhar Kapur's ground-breaking Indian film about the legendary outlaw Phoolan Devi, who followed an abused childhood with a bandit career as champion of the oppressed. Nudity and violence have kept the film off Indian screens; while the lady herself claims intrusion of privacy and distortion of the truth. Nonetheless, Kapur's film, shot in an urgent, eye-grabbing style, treats its story responsibly. **Chelsea** (0171-351 3742); **Clapham Picture House** (0171-498 3323); **Curzon West End** (0171-369 1722); **Odeon Kensington** (01426 914666); **Screen/Green** (0171-226 3520).

THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION (15): The writer-director Frank Darabont brings a few new kinks to the male prison movie genre with this absorbing drama based on a Stephen King story. Tim Robbins is the quietly spoken prisoner, a convicted murderer, who survives the decades at Shawshank prison by massaging the warden's crooked finances. **Odeon Leicester Square** (01426 915083).

• More films, page 6.

DANCE

John Percival

ROMEO AND JULIET: Rudolf Nureyev's production, created for English National Ballet in 1977, is probably the most dramatic and the most faithful to Shakespeare of any ballet version. Set to Prokofiev's monumental score, it has decors of Renaissance Italy by Ezio Frigerio, and strong roles for all its soloists. This week's revival at Southampton, after eight years absence from the British stage, is the beginning of a short tour. **Mayflower Theatre, Southampton** (01703 229771), Wed 22 to Sat 25 at 7.30pm; matinees: Thur 23 and Sat 25 at 2.30pm; **Bristol Hippodrome** (0117 929444) Mon 27 to Mar 4 at 7.30pm; matinee: Wed, Mar 1 at 2.30pm; **Palace Theatre, Manchester** (0161-242 5503), Mar 6-11 at 7.30pm; matinees: Wed and Sat at 2.30pm.

SPRING LOADED: Twenty-two small British dance companies will play from one to six nights each at The Place over the next 12 weeks, showing a wide range of choreography, mostly by young creators selected by the director John Ashford as being, in his view, fresh, vigorous and determined. The Gandini Juggling Project (Tue 21, Wed 22) and JazzExchange (Thurs 23 to Sat 25) start the series: full details from the box office. **The Place Theatre, Duke's Road, London WC1** (0171-387 0031), until May 13 at 8pm.

CHILDREN

LONDON

The Adventures of Theseus: The Legend Theatre Company travels through ancient Greece with the hero and discovers how he comes to meet the Minotaur. **Lyric Theatre, King Street, Hammersmith, W6** (0181-741 2311), Today, 11am, 1pm. Tickets £3. Age 5-11 years. (2)

Batik Workshops: The art of colouring fabric using wax and dyes will be demonstrated and explained. Everybody will make a batik picture to take home. **Commonwealth Institute, Kensington High Street, W8** (0171-603 4535), Tues 21 to Fri 24, 11am-12.30pm, 2.30pm-4pm. Admission £5. Age 8 and over. (2)

Tower Hill Pageant: Experience Europe's largest holograms. Sit in a time car and be transported from Roman times to the present day, seeing, hearing and smelling the past. **Tower Hill Pageant, opposite Tower of London, EC3** (0171-709 0081), Open daily 9.30am-5.30pm. Tickets: adults £5.95, children £3.95. (2)

Museum of London: See the museum's Private Eye detective in this conservation investigation drama or follow the fun trail and find out how objects are protected. **Museum of London, London Wall, EC2** (0171-600 0807), Museum open Tues 21 to Sat 25, 10am-5.30pm, Sun 26 12-5.30pm. Adults £3.50, children £1.75 (valid for three months). Performances free to museum visitors, tomorrow, Tues 21 to Fri 24, next Sun 26, 2pm and 3.15pm. (2)

DORSET

Wildlife Half-Term Special: Face-painting and mask-making with a wildlife theme. **RSPB Radipole Lake Nature Reserve, Weymouth** (01305 778313), Wed 22, 10am. Admission £1.50. Booking essential. (2)

MANCHESTER

The Atomic Lab: Find out about atoms. Also visit The Atom Show. **Manchester Museum of Science and Industry, Liverpool Road, Castlefield** (0161-832 2244), Museum open 10am-5pm. Admission: adults £3.50, children £1.50. The Atomic Lab, Mon-Fri, noon-3pm. (2)

TYNE AND WEAR

Thomas the Tank Engine Day: Colouring and story-telling with Christopher Awdry. **Monkwearmouth Station Museum, North Bridge Street, Sunderland** (0191-567 7075), Today, 10.30am-12.30pm and 1.30pm-3.30pm. Free. (2)



London's Tower Hill Pageant

WALES

Squirrel Nutkins Treasure Hunt: Look for nuts around the centre. Tomorrow, 2-4pm. Free. Also try clay modelling. **Tues, Fri, 2-4pm. Charge 50p. Nant Mill Centre, Nant Rd, Coedpoeth, Near Wrexham, Chwyd** (01978 752722). (2)

WEST SUSSEX

Country Crafts: See traditional country products created from woodland materials. Includes practical demonstrations by a beekeeper and a woodcarver. **RSPB Pulborough, Pulborough** (01798 875851), Today, 10am-1pm. Free. (2)

YORKSHIRE

Railways in Literature: Discover the trains from the classics with examples from Dickens. **Toad of Toad Hall and the Adventures of Rupert, National Railway Museum, Leeman Road, York** (01904 612011), Open Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 11am-6pm. Admission: adults £4.20, children £2.10. (2)

Prism: A fiery fiddler, a Celtic harpist and a bouzouki player perform folk music. **Under the Clock Tower, Town Hall, Wakefield** (01924 255121), Tomorrow, 11am; **Merlin Theatre, Meadow Bank Road, Sheffield** (0114 2551638), Tomorrow, 3pm. Adults £3, children £1.50. (2)

HEATHER ALSTON

More children's listings, page 19

In east London, Ruth Gledhill attends the 49th annual Grimaldi service for clowns

AT YOUR SERVICE



A clown wandered up and down the aisle, teasing the congregation. "Are you married? Do you want to be?" he demanded of a giggling, middle-aged churchgoer. I tried to sink into the unyielding wood of my pew wifery for his next trick he targeted the woman in front of me, who unwisely confessed she was no longer locked in wedded bliss. The clown handed her a long, yellow tubular object. "Brings back memories, don't it?" he said, scanning the congregation for his next victim. I prayed for deliverance. My prayers were answered and the service began.

This was the 49th annual Grimaldi service for clowns, taking place in a corner of Hackney, a sad-looking part of east London where the more hackneyed the joke, the better. As I arrived, white-faced clowns in full "slap", shiny shoes, baggy trousers of outrageous colours and red noses, were widening their melancholy smiles with make-up in the vestry. The traditional baggy clown's costume, with its tuft of black hair, is probably a relic of the devil in medieval miracle plays. Modern clowning developed out of the Italian *commedia dell'arte*, which produced the Arlecchino, or Harlequin, in the 16th century. This is where clowns from all over the world, irrespective of religious conviction, give thanks for the life of Joseph Grimaldi, the first true circus clown specialising in tumbling and slapstick, who died in 1837. As we began, the Rev John Willard, clowns' chaplain, asked us to remember that this was a church service. "In past



Acting the clown to give thanks for the life of Joseph Grimaldi

years some people have been very foolish. This does not make for a happy service," he said. "This is not an entertainment, it is an act of praise and worship to God, who gave us the gift of joy and love."

Suitably admonished, we tried with moderate success to stop laughing when some of the clowns in the front seven rows succumbed to the temptation to wiggle an ear or a pair of baggy trousers at the entranced "audience" behind. At the back, too sad and broken-hearted even to don the greasepaint, was a clown I knew from "normal" life, the Rev Patrick Forbes, press officer with the Church of England and founder member of the Holy Fools, ordained clowns who fool around in church instead of the circus ring. He was mourning the decision of the church authorities not to renew his job contract. Clowns processed in slowly, led by Smokey, one of Britain's oldest

clowns who was almost bent double, while we sang "Lord of the Dance". They enacted the second reading, the wedding miracle where water was turned into wine, but to my disappointment did not fool around with slices of metaphorical wedding cake and custard.

We prayed for forgiveness "for the times when we've failed to see the joke, and lost our sense of humour and perspective." We begged God's mercy for when "we have laughed at others instead of with them, been cruel and arrogant instead of loving". While the clowns processed to lay a wreath at the Joseph Grimaldi memorial corner, we sang the unlikely hymn: "When we are tempted in our pride to dizzy heights of sin, beneath our feet O Lord, provide a ripe banana skin!" The clowns asked God to help them to remember "that your foolishness is wiser than our wisdom." On leaving, I was left wondering

whether, instead of church being theatre dressed up as religion, the circus might not be religion disguised as theatre, with clergy dressed up as clowns.

Annual Clowns' Service at Holy Trinity, Beechwood Road, Dalston, London E8 (0171-254 5062).

CLOWNS' CHAPLAIN: The Rev John Willard.

ARCHITECTURE: Clownish-style. Ugly outside but elegant in, having survived bombs and arson attacks. Built in 1879, Shrine-like window in one corner commemorates Joseph Grimaldi. **

SERMON: Canon Roger Royle, former Conductor or senior chaplain at Eton, preached with style, energy and humour on how God is a God of the unexpected. "Those of you who are not clowns — sorry Mr Major — need to have the same flexibility, the same sense of humour, the same determination to be able to deal with whatever comes." ****

MUSIC: The clowns' chaplain chose the same hymns as the previous year, in the vain hope that the practice might encourage us to sing them better. **

LITURGY: Threatened at times to go out of control, such as when the clowns' chaplain demanded the response "no" from the congregation and the clowns retaliated with: "Oh yes you will." ***

AFTER-SERVICE CARE: It was meat and drink to us to see the clowns who, after the service, entertained us free. ****

SPIRITUAL HIGH: So many fools for Christ's sake left me on the edge of, if not quite toppling into, a kind of jooze bedlam. ***

* stars are awarded to a maximum of five.

Continued from page 1

them. "We all get a bit of fruit and veg," says Hollis, a partner at the management consultants Andersen. "Conversely, we're like detergent, or goods, are a downer, the greatest downer of all, is the chest-out."

Roughly speaking, that score as high as arranged around the ter of a supermarket. T wall is an excellent place high-profit items such meat, fish, dairy products, delicatessen foods, may miss individual at they can't miss the cash says Dr Robert Easton, School. "All the aisle shopping is more than it seems, according to geographer Dr Roy Br of Nottingham Un. "When I shop I go into with 15,000 lines and with 30 products," he says. "How do I make these and why?"

To find out, Dr Br group has set up can supermarkets, either customers on video or still pictures, every fe utes. "It's the first body has seen how store operates," he s finds that every stu "black holes" where shopping is done, where areas are veritable h The observations sh Two distinct forms of perception are in use.

"We're where doing the trolley, talking partner, keeping the quiet, steering and the shelves," Dr B says. "Our heads a tilted at about 20 because this is the be use saccadic vision. You need for scanning. You know how it you're driving and you see a boy racer in red car in the mirror what we're doing, was something to trigger scious part of the bra

That something a product we need to be everything "We stop. We don't heads, or our hands, put our hands to centre vision, and we focus packs, look at the price special offers. We're thing else and op Then we decide, and purchase into the trol Position on the important: a product level may sell twice the same product Supermarket manag put own-brand baker the left of the Heir because the eye rea right and will spot brand goods first. turers who want positions have to of sive" discounts to Dr East says. It is easy to assum

MEHAGU KULY SCIENCE PHOTO

COVER STORY

3



With fast food, cash dispensers and clean lavatories on offer, this petrol station on Wapping Highway has generated undreamt-of returns for Texaco

Continued from page 1
them. "We all get a high on fruit and veg," says John Hollis, a partner at the management consultants Arthur Andersen. "Conversely, products like detergent, or tinned goods, are a downer." (The greatest downer of all, he says, is the check-out.)

Roughly speaking, products that score as highs will be arranged around the perimeter of a supermarket, with the lows along the aisles. The back wall is an excellent place to sell high-profit items such as fresh meat, fish, dairy products and delicatessen foods. "People may miss individual aisles, but they can't miss the back wall," says Dr Robert East of Kingston University Business School. "All the aisles lead straight to it."

Shopping is more complex than it seems, according to geographer Dr Roy Bradshaw of Nottingham University. "When I shop I go into a store with 15,000 lines and come out with 30 products," he says. "How do I make those choices, and why?"

To find out, Dr Bradshaw's group has set up cameras in supermarkets, either tracking customers on video or taking still pictures every few minutes. "It's the first time anybody has seen how a whole store operates," he says. He finds that every store has "black holes" where little shopping is done, while other areas are veritable hot spots. The observations show that two distinct forms of visual perception are in use.

"What we're doing is pushing the trolley, talking to our partner, keeping the children quiet, steering, and scanning the shelves," Dr Bradshaw says. "Our heads are often tilted at about 20 degrees, because this is the best way to use saccadic vision, the type we need for scanning a scene. You know how it is when you're driving and suddenly you see a boy racer in a bright red car in the mirror? That's what we're doing, waiting for something to trigger the conscious part of the brain."

That something may be a product we know we need to buy. Then everything changes. "We stop. We don't move our heads, or our hands. We switch from saccadic to central, foveal vision, and we focus on the packs, and at the price and for special offers. We forget everything else and concentrate. Then we decide, and put the purchase into the trolley."

Position on the shelf is important: a product at eye-level may sell twice as well as the same product knee-high. Supermarket managers often put own-brand baked beans to the left of the Heinz display because the eye reads left to right and will spot the own-brand goods first. Manufacturers who want prime positions have to offer "massive" discounts to the stores, Dr East says.

It is easy to assume that the

width of the aisles is determined by the size of trolleys, but they are never too wide — that would encourage people to move too fast, and miss opportunities to buy. The ideal is to slow the customers down, by "bouncing" them to and fro across the aisle. To accomplish this, the best-selling digestive



In a world of their own

biscuit may be put on one side, with the most popular chocolate ones on the other.

Lighting and music can be used to create the right atmosphere. Music is supposed to relax shoppers and slow them down — once they're moving slowly, they begin to spot things on the shelves. Lighting is bright at the cosmetics counter to suggest cleanliness, but more subdued in the wine section, where the idea is to convey just a hint of the traditional wine cellar.

Dr Bradshaw's research has shown that it's not who you are, but who you're with, that determines a lot of shopping behaviour. "I can almost guarantee that a granny and two young children will go into a sweet shop," he says. "A man on his own is far less likely to go in to any shop than if he is with his wife."

But shops must beware of what Robert Lawson, of the National Opinion Poll Research Group, calls "the elastic band effect". NOP, too, has been using cameras to watch people shopping, and they show that couples appear to be linked by an invisible elastic band. If one partner is bored and moves away, the other is eventually drawn away, too.

The answer is to provide a diversion, so that both partners find something to interest them: comfortable seating near the changing rooms in women's wear shops, provided with newspapers to keep bored husbands happy, is an obvious example.

Shopping, says Richard Mott, managing director of 20/20, a retail consultancy, can be divided into needs and wants. Needs are the dutiful things that you have to buy — the weekly food shop, for example. Wants are leisure shopping, fancy toys for the children, luxury items, books, records, and foodstuffs that tickle the tastebuds. The retailer's ambition is to shift people like me from needs to wants, preferably without us noticing. Bernard Dooling, creative

director at 20/20, cites spectacles as a classic example of this. For everybody until a few years ago — and for me to this day — glasses were a "needs" purchase, entered into only once about every three years. But designer glasses that say something about you, are a "wants" purchase. For the optician, they ring the tills much more thrillingly.

The supermarket can be seen as an arena in which people are drawn from needs to wants within a single store. You may go in to buy a loaf of bread, but you're liable to come out with a bottle of wine as well, plus a pack of Milan salami and a treat for the dog. "The dutiful products along the aisles draw you to the enjoyable ones at the periphery," Mr Dooling says. "When the customer gets to the bread counter, it's designed to look more like an old-fashioned bakery, and the same is true of the fish. The supermarkets play to historic memories."

Many shops, indeed, fit the same pattern. A retailer such as W. H. Smith has its needs-driven sections, such as stationery, and its want-driven bits, such as books and records. For BHS, 20/20 has designed a new look, enticing people round, bouncing them off displays at focal points. "Attract, inspire, capture" was the slogan 20/20 used to sell its plans to BHS.

Each department needs to play a slightly different tune. Children's clothes needs a clear-cut layout, with sizes, age-groups and sexes clearly marked, because mothers generally know what they're looking for. Men's shoes are heavily brand-dependent. "When a man goes to buy

shoes, he wants to see brand names," Mr Dooling says. "Though he may not buy the most expensive brands, just to see them there is reassuring."

Bringing retailers together, in the cooing safety of a mall inspires its own reactions from shoppers. For many users, malls seem to act almost like a drug, putting them into a dream-like state which has been called "flow". Some mall inhabitants, says Dr Peter Bloch, an American psychologist from the University of Missouri, are like people in the casinos of Las Vegas, out of touch with time and weather. "If the consumption activity is sufficiently pleasant, the hours may glide by," he says.

Minimalists appear immune to the appeal of flow, or maybe they are simply unable to attain this state of shopping heaven where nothing matters but the goods and the means of attaining them. Enthusiasts are the most likely to experience flow, which may be why they spend so much time in the mall. They are, in a subtle sense, addicted to it — I shop, therefore I am.

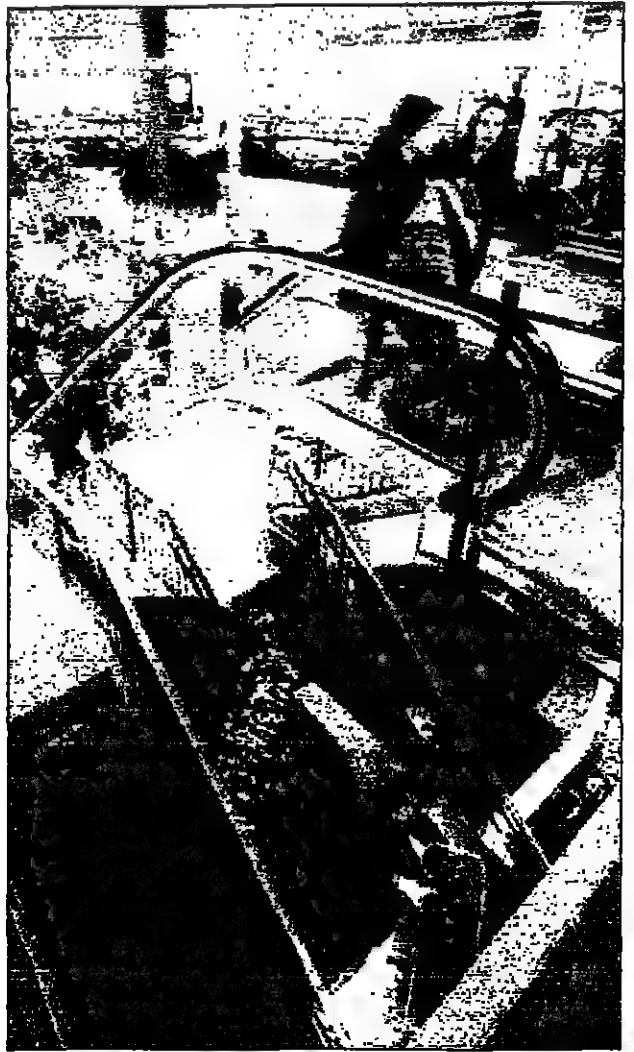
The shopping phenomenon appears to be engulfing this country. In every corner of every town, somebody is buying something every second of the day, or thinking about it. Ron Woodman, marketing manager of the MetroCentre, says: "People are quite happy to spend five hours getting here. When they arrive, the first thing they do is go straight into Marks and Spencer — they've probably passed about 25 of them on the way."

Even MetroCentre has some way to go before it can match West Edmonton Mall in Alberta, Canada's top tourist attraction, with its 800 stores, 110 restaurants, and a theme park covering 400,000 sq ft. In America, shopping malls generate 13 per cent of the GNP — around \$800 billion. Today, it seems, almost everything has been turned into a shopping opportunity. Museums, football grounds, stately homes, even national parks have their own shops. At Heathrow Airport recently I saw a sign apologising for the disruption caused by building work designed to create "a richer retailing environment" — better shops, to you and I.

Where lies the future of shopping? 20/20 has achieved the apparently impossible, and turned a petrol station into an attractive shop. This Texaco-owned paragon is on Wapping Highway, east London, and offers fast food, cash dispensers and clean lavatories. "The returns from the site are amazing," Richard Mott says. "They've hit figures they didn't believe possible."

John Hollis, who is responsible for Smart Store Europe, a centre in Windsor where the latest technology of retailing can be explored, sees supermarkets losing some of their dominance to electronic home shopping. He expects dull, dutiful products such as detergents to be hived off and sold through screen or telephone-based systems, with direct delivery to the home.

He expects supermarkets to lose maybe a fifth of their merchandise in this way, but not much more. "Human beings have a deep-seated desire to go to market," he says. The 100,000 Norwegians who cross the North Sea every year to visit MetroCentre would say amen to that. Shop on.



The MetroCentre in Gateshead is a major tourist attraction

Supermarket obstacle course trips up elderly

Jack Crossley grows old before his time, and finds a trip to the supermarket leaves him frightened and angry

I met that Pauline Athersmith in the supermarket the other day. She puts years on you, that woman.

What she put on me was a two-kilo lead weight on my left ankle, a one-kilo lead weight on my right wrist, a blurred pair of spectacles, a pair of earplugs, two surgical rubber gloves on each hand and a blow-up swim-aid on my left arm.

She hung all this stuff on me to simulate what it's like if you have recently had a stroke, your sight is failing and you've got arthritis.

She then said, "Let's go shopping." Pauline Athersmith is an unusual lady who goes around the country teaching retail outlets and manufacturers what a hell they have created for the elderly and infirm.

She is project co-ordinator of Age Concern's "Through Other Eyes" programme, and on the day I met her she managed, within half an hour, to turn a group of tough cookies into insecure oldies.

Executives from supermarket packaging firms, food and petfood suppliers, and journalists from grocery and packaging magazines were subjected to Pauline's ageing treatment and all ended up the same: frightened, isolated, insecure — and angry.

We met at the Institute of Grocery Distribution in Hertfordshire where Pauline and her team had mocked up the kind of supermarket we all know and hate: badly signposted goods, shelves out of reach, trolleys abandoned on dangerous corners, unhelpful and uninterested check-out staff, products in packages that even people with 20/20 vision find difficult to read and more difficult to open.

Wearing our instant-wrinkle outfits we were given specific tasks: locate a jelly. How do you get it to set quickly?

Locate a packet of spaghetti. How long does it take to cook? I found the items, but couldn't read the small-print instructions.

At the check-out we felt guilty for not having the right money ready and for the time it took our arthritic fingers to pay, receive change and pack our purchases.

We were then asked to open our purchases. Almost impossible with some of them. Cheeses with impenetrable plastic coverings. Sauce bottles with unyielding

screw tops. Milk cartons resisting all reasonable approaches before spuming their contents down your shirt.

"I always get a knife or a pair of scissors," I told Pauline. "Me too," said some of the others.

"Exactly," said Pauline. "That's one of the reasons why 46,000 people a year need hospital treatment for injuries suffered opening packages."

She gave us some annual figures for the causes of accidents: corned beef tins 402; other tins 965; glass bottles 550; aerosols 43; blister packs 12; tool and toy boxes 160; plastic pots and tubs 85. Four people went to hospital last year after trying to open paper bags.

Age Concern is attracting favourable attention from industry. Safeways executives are put through the programme. Tetrapak, formerly one of the great sinners, has taken it on board. This huge packaging firm pleads guilty to having made exploding milk cartons. It has now perfected user-friendly, non-exploding ones which will be on sale in the not too distant future.

The core of "Through Other Eyes" is a sensory simulation workshop designed to acquaint participants with the special needs of older people," Pauline says. "By wearing simple devices, they can temporarily experience some of the effects of ageing, including a decline in vision, hearing, mobility, agility and strength."

"The weights on the ankle and wrist simulate the effects of a stroke by reducing the strength of the muscle. The swim aid on the arm reduces elbow joint mobility. The blurred goggles simulate tunnel vision, cataracts and damaged retinas. Two surgical gloves on each hand desensitise the fingers and also simulate arthritic stiffening of the joints."

I lost patience with the plastic wrap round the jelly and finally took the scissors to it. Rowntree's spokesperson Hilary Parsons, public affairs manager with Nestlé (UK), says: "We make every effort to ensure that information on our packaging is legible and believe this cartoon is presented clearly. However, if it is felt that the typeface is too small we are happy to listen to what is regarded as acceptable and see if it can be incorporated."

I have arranged a treat for Hilary: Pauline will be in touch — with an offer to put years on her.

Age Concern: Pauline Athersmith, Project Co-ordinator, Age Concern, 77 High Green, Cannock, Staffordshire (01543 503660; fax 01543 504640).

CHRIS PEARSON



Jack Crossley (left) has trouble with the small print

Shopping rules

HABIT RULES the supermarket shopper in Britain, according to the surveys by Dr Robert East of Kingston University Business School.

More than 60 per cent say they usually go on a particular day — Friday and Saturday between them accounting for almost half of all spending — and two thirds say they usually go at the same time of day.

This is, near enough, 11am in the morning. "Most people say they could go at a different time, but do nothing about it," Dr East says. From Wednesday onwards there is also an early-evening peak caused by people shopping after work.

The principal shopper in most households is a woman, but in about a fifth it is a man. Locality counts most in choosing a supermarket, followed by price, quality and range. But price has become more important in the 1990s, moving up from fourth to second position. "There's a definite sea-change in price consciousness," Dr East says. In America, price has long been shown in surveys to be the most important criterion.

Dr East has also looked at whether retailers' own brands can attract a loyal clientele, and finds they can't, except perhaps in the case of Sainsbury's.

O sublime queen
Of breathtaking beauty.
I can but marvel
At your radiance and warmth.
And it is no wonder to me
That Aphrodite herself
Was raised against your gentle shores.



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ing on small profit margins, are not in a position to test "fair dealing" in the courts.

There would be more sympathy for the EC's 70-year ruling if movie heirs, publishers and copyright agencies gave the impression that they actually cared about the art or literature assigned to them, rather than regarding it simply as an asset on which income must be maximised. The EC talks grandly about copyright being "fundamental to intellectual creation" — and so it is. Nobody wants to strip authors of their rights; most have difficult enough lives as it is.

But taking the works of long-dead authors out of the public domain has nothing to do with "intellectual creation". It simply hands a large windfall to organisations that are mostly doing very nicely already. And as more of the public's money is channelled into royalties for the heirs of dead authors, so less of it is available to support the living artist. The EC is stifling, not supporting, intellectu-

THEATRE: Stephen Fry is George Blake in Simon Gray's new play; French law meets its Dunkirk

Coldest heart in Cold War

Many of Simon Gray's characters have their dark, devious sides. They lie, cheat, manipulate each other, and betray spouses and friends with a frequency surely above the national average. Myself, I wouldn't go into the jungle with one of them, because he would probably end up implicating me in cannibalism and worse. Come to think of it, one of them did just that in *The Rear Column*, Gray's foray into the 19th-century Congo.

But *Cell Mates* is the first of his plays to involve someone professionally treacherous. Its subject is George Blake, the Soviet spy sprung from Wormwood Scrubs in 1966 with the help of a saw, a rope-ladder, a few wet English liberals, and the sentimental but resourceful petty crook he had befriended before the bars. Sean Bogue freed Blake from an English trap, and, Gray suggests in this absorbing if slightly underpowered play, Blake's thank-you was to lure Bogue into a Russian one.

The play has its implausibilities, among them that an Irishman could survive alone for six weeks in a freezing Moscow without shelter or a word of Russian. But the preposterously amateurish escape — which leaves Rik Mayall's Blake tending Stephen Fry's quaking Blake in a London bedsit while a representative of the rent-collecting classes and other odd bods blunder in — strikes me as

Cell Mates Albery

comically credible. The problem is that a switch of action to Blake's flat in Moscow does not generate quite the tension and grim humour we had been led to hope, though it is hard to tell who is at fault. Gray the dramatist or Gray the director of his own play.

Mayall's cheery Bourke has gone there out of friendship and plans to stay a week before returning to Behan-like celebrity in the Dublin pubs. Instead, two doubly welcoming members of the KGB take his passport, hand him another in a Ukrainian name, and then take that away. They ask him to stay first three months, next five years, on the grounds that going home might compromise Blake's other helpers. But Blake himself goes further, manipulating poor, bewildered Bourke into believing that these glib functionaries are James Bond villains who will murder him if he resists their will.

Mayall has a goodish scene in which he transforms himself into a parody bum, but otherwise he is not greatly challenged. Gray's main interest is Blake, a spy, as he doubtless knows, whose 42-year sentence reflected his 42 victims. Fry sits over a tape-recorder, admitting that Stalin's mass murders are "a sensitive issue", proclaiming his moral duty to the future.



This way out: Rik Mayall (left) as Sean Bourke and Stephen Fry as George Blake in Simon Gray's *Cell Mates*

What justice cannot see

THIS play begins with a murder and ends with a verdict, and much of the 90 minutes between takes place in a Paris courtroom. But there the familiar formula of courtroom drama ends.

French legal procedure is the least of the differences. Counsel are more directly rude to one another than barristers in the British theatre. So is the judge. As Roger also to the prison-keeper Suzanneauze, whom the prosecutors treat with undisguised contempt, but then this is 1953 and, as a schoolgirl in Dunkirk during the war, she became the lover of a German medical officer.

Now she has killed her former boyfriend and fellow medical student. We see her do so, and she admits it to the

Portrait of a Woman
Orange Tree,
Richmond

It is possible to discern a motive from the other scenes Vinaver introduces: brief conversations with Xavier, her eventual victim (attractive portrait by Simon Day), her parents, fellow students, landlady and lovers. But their purpose is to present her essential unknowability.

The key to her character and motive lies in a reference to her childhood retreat, a pear tree where she was invincible. Told that she means invisible, Tregear is quietly insistent: "No, I was invincible because unseen." This is more than wordplay: love equals exposure, and for Sophie exposure equals threat. But the lawyers never notice.

JEREMY KINGSTON

GREAT BRITISH HOPES
Rising stars in the arts firmament
SARAH WILDOR

Profession: Ballet dancer
Age: 23

How it all started: Born in Eastwood, Essau attended the Royal Ballet School after training locally, "initially just to get me out of the house". Joined the Royal Ballet in 1991. Promoted to soloist last year.

How it almost ended: At 16, spent four months with her entire torso in plaster, thanks to two stress fractures in her back.

Biggest moments so far: Debuts last season in two principal roles: Juliet and Titania (in Ashton's *The Dream*), both of which earned musical awareness and drama. "When they told me I was lovely to do, and I probably think I look about 14 now. I'm 40."

Worst moment: In December, when injury forced her to miss her debut in Ashton's *Daphnis and Chloe*. "I went over my ankle and tore a ligament in my foot. The timing was awful — two days before the first show."

And now another debut: Wildor makes her debut as Giselle this afternoon at Covent Garden (with a repeat performance on March 8). "I've been thinking about this character for ages and have decided how I want to portray her. I think she's a little bit mad right from the beginning."

Defining characteristics? Tiny, blonde and unusually delicate. The exact antithesis of Sylvie Guillem and her brand of in-your-face pyrotechnics.

Is she as musical as everyone says: "I just like music a lot. Because I'm not incredibly technical and can't do steps very easily, the music helps me. If I really listen then, it just happens, rather than thinking about the steps. I used to play the piano, and I'm thinking of taking it up again. I was never really that great, but I used to make things up because I wasn't very good at sight reading."

Fun in her spare time: "I like to look after my three cats. I think I'm obsessed by them; I find them really therapeutic."
Ideal day: "Not in the ballet studio, anyway. Except that, when I was injured, I never missed anything so much in my life. Now I appreciate what I've got."

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ARTS

NEW ON VIDEO: Opera in the jungle; Wagner at length; Nicholson with bite

WEST END ENTERTAINMENT

BEARING FRUIT Deborah Page directs two short plays by women. The authors are Helen Al-Shaykh, Helen Edmundson, Lavinia Murray, Meredith Oakes and Sara Sugman. Hampstead Swiss Cottage Centre, NW10 0JH (0171-222 5071) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat, Sat, 4pm.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL John Mortimer's adaptation, Ian Judge's direction and Celia Francis's Scrooge make this a joyous evening, well narrated from the moral lesson of Dickens' *Barnaby Rudge*. S&K, EC2 (0171-438 8891) Tonight-Fri 7.30pm, mat today, Thurs and next Sat, 2pm.

THE CLAUDEBINE MARRIAGE Roger Hargrave plays the disgraced Lord Claudel and directs a strong cast in the good-hearted comedy about 18th-century greed, snobbery and true love. Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-404 5041) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm.

THE DANCE OF DEATH Stenborg's impassioned, sometimes comic, view of marriage as hell. Subtle characterization by Germa Jones and John Hodge. Almeida, St. N (0171-352 4404) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Sat, 4pm.

DAUGHTER OF THE LION Kevin Bayley directs an excellent cast in Presley's psychological thriller about the grey areas in people's lives it is never too late to probe into. Whitehall, SW1 (0171-309 1755) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Wed 3pm and Sat 5pm. Until Mar 11.

DEALER'S CHOICE Patrick Marber's fascinating poker drama. Funny one-liners abound, along with perceptions of the roots of gambling. National Comedy Centre, South Bank, SE1 (0171-328 2222) Tonight-Wed, 7.30pm, mat today and Wed, 2.30pm.

DESIGN FOR LIVING Rupert Graves and Marcus D'Amico join Rachel Wenzel for the transfer of Sean Mathias's award-winning domestic production of Coward's *Design for Living*. Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5059) Now previewing, 8pm. Opens Feb 20, 7pm.

THE DUCHESSE OF MALI See *Clubs* page 2.

FEVER PITCH The one-man show adapted from Nick Hornby's best-selling account of a lifelong obsession — with Arsenal FC. Stephen North takes us through 45 minutes each way.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only

Some seats available

Seats at all prices

Arts, Great Newport Street, WC2 (0171-436 2132) Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 6.15 and 8.30pm

HAMILT Ralph Fiennes in Jonathan Kent's eagerly awaited Almeida production brings

Shakespeare back to a majestic, Flair

Malcham theatre. Cast includes

Francesca Annis, James Lounson,

Prosser Evans, Paulson Joseph and

Terence Raby. Hackney Empire, Mare Street, E8 (0171-352 1925) Today's preview, 2.30

(seats), 7.30pm (no seats)

INDIAN INK Polony Kordal,

Margaret Tyacke and Art Malik in Tom

Stoppard's new play, set in unknowable

India in 1930. In a Shakespearean

burlesque today. Peter Wood directs

Alwaych. Alwaych, WC2 (0171-416

6003) Now previewing, 7.30pm; mat

Sat, 3pm. Opens Feb 27

THE LIVE BED SHOW Caroline

Quentin and Paul Merton play a couple

on their journey towards sharing a bed

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Garrick, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-394 5065) Mon-Thurs, 8pm, Fri

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WAGNER I WANT TO SING The

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STRICTLY ENTRE NOUS Dudley Sutton plays W.H. Auden when old and Rupert Hovey when young. His re-creation of a younger self in *Vivian's* play, set in a shabby Venetian hotel. B&C, Laverdine Hill, Battersea, SW11 (0171-223 2222) Tue-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 6pm. Until Mar 11.

THE THREE LIVES OF LUCIE CARROLL Award-winning performance from Lila Baur in Simon McBurney's intriguing production of the lives and anguish of a woman. A Theatre de Complicité production. Shaftesbury, Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2 (0171-378 3389) Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, Sat, 8pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm.

THE THREEPENNY OPERA Physica Lloyd's splendidly inventive revival of Kurt Weill's opera. Tom Hollander sings, Madeline and Verity by the team of writers customarily known as 'Dorothy Breda'. Donmar Warehouse, Earlham St, WC2 (0171-363 1735) Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Wed and Sat, 3pm.

THE MUSICAL The masked swashbuckler rights wrongs, defies gravity and gives the audience a great time in a typically rumbustious Ken Hill show. Theatre Royal, Gilly Street, Stratford, E15 (0181-534 0310) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm and Sat 11 and 18, 3pm. Until Mar 18.

LONG RUNNERS *Arctique* Haymarket (0171-330 8800). *Buddy* Victoria Palace (0171-330 8317). *Clubs* New London (0171-405 0072).

Capacitance Prince of Wales (0171-330 8872). *Crucy for You* Prince of Wales (0171-330 8872).

Five Guys Named Moe Lyric (0171-434 5045). *Grease* Dominion (0171-416 8907). *La Marseillaise* Palace (0171-434 0009).

Miss Saigon Theatre Royal (0171-404 5040). *Next to Normal* Apollo (0171-404 5070). *On the Beach* Palladium (0171-434 5023).

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FITZCARRALDO

Tartan, 15, 1992

FEW Werner Herzog films

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Herzog, his star Klaus Kinski

and the crew went to hell and

back shooting on location, but

the difficulties never mar the

result. The tape, annoyingly

fuzzy in quality, launches a

"Werner Herzog Collection"

that may revive interest in this

flamboyant director.

Werner Herzog Collection

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ARTS

7

RECORDINGS: Heather Nova walks this world, starting in Bermuda; the hard bop blueprint dusted off; some Rattling good Schoenberg

POP

David Sinclair

HEATHER NOVA
Walk This World
Butterfly/Big Life BFLD19**
SOUNDING like the missing link between Annie Lennox and Sheryl Crow, the Bermudan singer-songwriter Heather Nova combines a traditional soft-rock sound with a seductive melodic flair on *Walk This World*.

Her lyrics conjure an unusual air of drama too, cleverly intertwining religious imagery with a plea for devotion to a purely personal nature: "With the light in our eyes it's hard to see/I'm not touched but I'm aching to be/I want you to come walk this world with me."

This is the first single from Nova's overlooked album, *Oyster*, released last year, and the package is fleshed out with two other songs, *Home* and *Blind*, which reveal a quieter and more haunting side to her work.

BLUES

David Sinclair

JOHN LEE HOOKER

Chill Out
Pointblank/Virgin
VPB 22**

NOW 74 years old and with a deep, dark drawl as rich as burnt oak, John Lee Hooker has proved a bluesman of unbelievable resilience. And apart from collaborations with Carlos Santana, on the title track, and Van Morrison on a raucous medley of *Saves Me Right To Suffer* and *Syndicator*, the album highlights the classic, bare-bones style that has always been the essence of his artistry.

Half of the numbers are new Hooker compositions and half feature nothing more elaborate than the man's voice, accompanied by one or two guitars and the insistent tap of his foot on the studio floor. The best of these — a reworking of *Tupelo* and a new song called *Woman On My Mind* — are both slow, stark narratives which delve deep into the muddy well of emotion that lies at the heart of the blues.

Although Hooker is the master of the one-take, ad-libbed vocal, there is, overall, a slight surplus of similarly slow, off-the-cuff vamps. But unlike his last album, the disappointing *Boom Boom*, released in 1992, *Chill Out* also boasts some splendidly focused ensemble performances, notably a buoyant arrangement of Brook Benton's 1960 hit, *Kiddio*, and a supremely swinging version of Hooker's evergreen barroom shuffle *One Bourbon, One Scotch, One Beer*.

In a genre where authenticity is at a premium, there is no more genuine article than this.

JAZZ

Clive Davis

CLIFFORD BROWN & MAX ROACH

Alone Together: The Best of the Mercury Years
Verve 52637-2 (2 CDs)**

ONE lesser-known fact about Clifford Brown, the finest of the trumpeters to come out of the post-bop era, is that as a student he initially majored in maths. It may be idle to speculate on the extent to which the mathematician's passion for order and structure influenced his music, yet what does set his playing apart from most of his contemporaries is its sense of form and its subtle combination of power and self-discipline.

He was only 25 when he was killed in a car crash, an event which shook the jazz world as much as James Dean's death touched film-goers a year earlier. Quite a number of the bebop players met premature ends, often through drink or drugs, or both. Brown's sunny disposition and his exemplary life-style only served to deepen the sense of loss.

The brilliant quintet he led with the drummer Max Roach forms the cornerstone of this idiosyncratic compilation. Opening with *Cherokee*, taken from the popular *A Study in Brown*, the contents drift fur-



On the way up: singer-songwriter Heather Nova occupies the middle ground between Annie Lennox and Sheryl Crow

ther afield to encompass dates with Sarah Vaughan and Helen Merrill as well as the "with strings" album made a year before Brown's death.

Together the Brown/Roach axis helped draw up the blueprint for hard bop, a virile formula that would be ground out by many bands over the next decade. Few of their rivals would bring as much rhythmic vitality to the task.

The Miles Davis Quintet, which belonged in a category all its own, possessed a more lyrical touch, but for pure athleticism Brown and Roach took some beating. Even at the briskest tempo, Brown's artic-

ulation is never less than pin-sharp. And to hear his lush reading of *Star Dust* on the strings session is to glimpse one of the inspirations, surely, for Wynton Marsalis's orchestral disc *Hot House Flowers*.

With the second disc the focus shifts to Roach's subsequent progress, culminating in a 1960 date with his wife-to-be, Abbey Lincoln, a singer who has always been an acquired taste. Roach's classical leanings lead him into an overblown set-piece, *Max's*

Variations, made with the Boston Percussion Ensemble, but the more conventional pieces showcase his skill at turning up the heat on fleet-footed soloists.

JOE LOVANO
Rush Hour
Blue Note CDP-8292692**

IN THE week that Jan Garbarek and the Hilliard Ensemble come to town, Lovano's tenor improvisations, set above Gunther Schuller's chamber orchestrations, make rather more astirring listening. *Angel Eyes* and Mingus's *Peggy's Blue Skylight* both sparkle; the rest yield mixed results.

JOE VENUTI & GEORGE BARNES
Gems
Concord CCD-6014**

AN APT title for a violin and guitar masterclass, reissued from 1975, delivered by a double act which seems constitutionally incapable of failing to swing. Venuti took out a patent on jazz violin playing in the 1920s. The fingers had lost little of their nimbleness half a century later.

20TH CENTURY
Stephen Pettitt

SCHOENBERG
Chamber Symphony No 11
Erwartung/Variations for orchestra

Bryn-Julson/Birmingham Contemporary Music Group/City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra/Rattle
EMI 5 55212 2**

THIS is a distinguished addition of three key works by Arnold Schoenberg to Sir Simon Rattle's discography. He begins with a fast and furious,

feverishly incisive yet always coherent performance of the First Chamber Symphony with the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group. The difference between this work, composed in 1906, and *Erwartung*, of 1909, is vast.

Schoenberg's brand of expressionism was not just about the abandonment of established key-systems but about the breaking down of other regularities — metre and phrase — in favour of fluid gestures and colours that make possible this nightmarish distilled opera for one character.

It is a disturbingly compelling journey into the darkest recesses of the psyche, the dream we all experience where we have done something dreadful and want desperately to undo it. (In this case the protagonist stumbles upon the body of her lover, whom she might have killed herself.) There can be no beginning, middle nor end, only a nightmarish continuation. Phyllis Bryn-Julson sings marvellously, lost in the character's imaginings but also clear in her projection and hence dramatically potent. The band — now the full, mighty force of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra — plays alertly and keenly, thoroughly believing in the work, as any musician worth his or her salt should.

The disc ends with the *Orchestral Variations*, Op 31, dating from 1928 and arguably Schoenberg's orchestral masterpiece, a work that achieves richness and personality from the restrictions that many still claim rendered his music detached and inert. Not here. The language has the fluidity which perhaps eluded him in his earlier serial works for piano, for instance. And in any

case what do we find after only a few bars of atonal oscillations but bland open fifths, pregnant with tonal implication, besides the Bach motif that emerges later with all the resonances that that implies.

The performance is again alive and clear, well shaped, strongly rhythmic (something that returned after Schoenberg's atonal phase) and with many thrilling moments, not least the vividly captured snarling of the tuba at the end of variation eight.

WEBER
Various works
Soloists/BBC Singers/Ensemble
InterContemporain/Boulez
Deutsche Grammophon
437 756-2**

THIS disc of Pierre Boulez's great love, the music of Weber, is probably a record in



Boulez: evident motivation

more senses than one; its 69 minutes of music is split into 42 tracks, of which the first, the Schoenberg-influenced and Brahmsian *Piano Quintet* of 1907, takes 13 minutes. But snippets Weber's fragments are not. The notes do not say what Boulez directed and

what he left to the players of the Ensemble InterContemporain, but even without him beating time, as seems likely in the song cycles with four or fewer instruments, his presence as motivator is strongly evident.

Expressive readings of the *Five Pieces for Small Orchestra*, Op 10, and the *Concerto for Nine Instruments*, Op 24, form the framework of this recital; the BBC Singers also make important contributions in choral pieces such as *Entflicht auf leichten Kahren*, Op 2, a transitional piece, and in the two Op 19 *Lieder* for chorus and ensemble.

Otherwise, besides the Op 22 Quartet for violin, clarinet, tenor saxophone and piano — music as ultra-refined and exquisite as the more famous *Concerto* — this disc is a recital for voice and instrumental ensemble.

Françoise Pollet takes responsibility for the earlier works, including the four *Orchestral Songs*, Op 13, as well as the heady atmospheric, ripe songs of Op 8 and 14, lending a richness that the purer-voiced, more intimate Christiane Oelze does not possess. Nevertheless, Oelze's approach is perfectly suited to the severe but still strangely sensual canons of Op 15, 16 and 17, where Weber's attempts to distance himself from his carefully chosen sacred and traditional texts only make his relationship with the words more tantalising.

OPERA

John Higgins

FERRUCCIO TAGLIAVINI

Opera arias
Various orchestras and conductors
Cetra CDO 105**

CETRA's collection offers an excellent opportunity to consider the qualities — and defects — of the Italian tenor Ferruccio Tagliavini, who died three weeks ago at the age of 63. The earliest track on the disc, which spans almost 20 years of his career, is the *Cherry Duet* from Mascagni's *L'amico Fritz*, dating from 1942. It comes from the complete recording conducted by the composer himself, with Pia Tassinari, the tenor's wife who predeceased him, as Suzel. There is an immediate sheen on the voice coupled with ravishing head tones, which he could well have learnt from Tito Schipa. Almaviva's *Ecco ridente*, recorded in 1961, showed that he could still command a good deal of grace, but the timbre shows signs of wear.

During the 1950s, when Tagliavini was in his forties, he took on a number of roles that were too heavy for him. At times he was apt to shout and interpolate the occasional sob — not acceptable in our more fastidious days. Some of this is reflected on Cetra, and his excursion into *Werther*, the last role he sang on stage, was ill advised on the evidence of *Ah non mi ridestrai*.

But there are enough tracks that show Tagliavini at close to his best: Faust's *Dai prati* from *Mefistofele* and, above all, Elvino's *Prendi l'anel* from *Sonnambula*. Connoisseurs will relish the Act IV duet from *Bohème*, where Tagliavini is joined by Cesare Siepi, and regret that tenor and bass appeared so rarely in London.

SUMI JO
Virtuoso Arias
Monte Carlo Orchestra/Olmi
Erato 4509-97239-2**

LAST summer, Decca brought out a disc of French coloratura numbers with the Korean soprano Sumi Jo. Two more of the same come on Erato's collection *Virtuoso Arias*. The Bell Song from *Lakmé* and the Shadow Song from Meyerbeer's *Dinorah*, both assigned to the titular heroine, are dispatched with Sumi Jo's customary ease, her upper register pealing out with precise chime like Delibes's own belfry. She is at her best in the 19th-century French repertoire.

But also reflected here are her recent opera-house moves into Italian bel canto. Here the steps are less secure. The *Mad Scene* from *Lucia* lacks tension and Amina's closing aria from *Sonnambula* is exces-

sively moony until the lady's final outburst of rejoicing, when Sumi Jo lets the notes fly out. She is fine as the Queen of the Night, much less good as Strauss's Zerbinetta. To round off, there is a Korean folk song, sounding distinctly occidental in Marius Constant's scoring, but very catching if not very "virtuoso".

INSTRUMENTAL

Hilary Finch

RAVEL

Gaspard, Valses, etc
Boris Berezovsky
Teldec 4509-94539-2**

RAVEL'S little triptych of Symbolist horror, *Gaspard de la nuit*, has had the frisson factor restored at last. Even the most beguiling virtuoso can reduce its now familiar tableaux of water-sprite, gnomes and nocturnal gnome to the single dimension of a set of piano studies. But by combining fluid fingerwork with ever-shifting levels of dynamic recession, Boris Berezovsky recreates not only the uneasy swing of a physical gibbet but Everyman's nagging fear of mortality, too.



Ravel: triptych of horror

This Ravel recital delights by provocation. Berezovsky takes a sidelong glance at the *Valses nobles et sentimentales*. His are neither: he prefers to play them with a sense of irony which the music can certainly take. Brittle sparks fly from his loudest playing; the quiet moments have a haunting knowingsness. The sudden rhythmic menace of the fragments from which *Les Valses* germinate gives warning that, for Berezovsky, this heady tribute to Strauss is, at heart, an apocalyptic dance of death. It is, with Berezovsky's *Sonata*, one of the most persuasive performances of the work currently on disc.

RODRIGO

Piano Works
Arur Pizarro

*Collins Classics 14342***
THE first performance of Ravel's *Gaspard* was given by the Spanish pianist Ricardo Vines, and his playing of Albeniz's *Torre Bemeja* is affectionately celebrated by Rodrigo in a third piano piece, *Al Ombre de Torre Bemeja*. It concludes Arur Pizarro's enterprising recital of rarely heard piano pieces by a composer more often honoured in the guitar.

The entire programme is formed of music of recall and memory: vignettes of people, places and fellow composers, from the grave, aristocratic pavan in the *Cinco Pizzas del Siglo XVI* to the *Evocaciones* in homage to Turina. Pizarro shines new light on these bright inner visions of the blind Spanish composer.

ORCHESTRAL

Barry Millington

UNE FLUTE A L'OPERA
Gallois/London Festival Orchestra/Poppe
DG 445 823-2**

FLAUTISTS in the 19th century had a less good time of it than they had done previously. Composers were ceasing to turn out works for the instrument in their customary profusion, and star flautists were driven to make paraphrases of popular operas. Patrick Gallois selects four such paraphrases on this disc — on *La Traviata*, *Guillaume Tell*, *Un ballo in maschera* and *Carmen* — and renders them with all the skill and panache one could possibly ask for, ably accompanied by the London Festival Orchestra under Ross Pople. These are, then, transcriptions of a respectable vintage, though in places they have been revised (by Fabrice Pierre) to include more tunes from the operas in question.

The four paraphrases are separated by three better known operatic melodies (the *Berceuse* from Godeard's *Jocelyn*, the *Méditation* from *Thaïs*, and the Song of the Nightingale from Victor Massé's *Les Noeuds de Jeanette*). The arrangements are again by Fabrice Pierre, who also plays harp. Gallois uses a beautiful African blackwood instrument made by Chris Abell, which enables him to achieve a notable mellowness of tone without any of the acoustic imperfections of older instruments.

GLAZUNOV/DVORAK

Violin Concertos
Kaler/Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra/Kolchinsky
Naxos 8.550758**

THE invaluable Naxos project of providing the mainstream repertoire on its budget label continues apace. Two more gaps are usefully plugged by this disc, which couples the violin concertos of Glazunov and Dvorak in attractive recordings.

Glazunov, born in 1865, was hostile to the modernist school. Even so, many young composers, including Shostakovich, proclaimed a debt to him. Not that that is obvious from this typically melodic, easy-going work. It has a rich vein of lyricism that is tapped by the accomplished Russian violinist, Ilya Kaler, and the conductor Camilla Kolchinsky, one of only two prominent women conductors in the former Soviet Union.

The Dvorak concerto resonates with the characteristic sounds and rhythms of the Czech tradition — all of which are sympathetically communicated by the performers here. Dvorak's *Romance* in F Minor, Op 11, is a welcome filler.

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GARDENING

11

David Blundell explains the lure of his allotment ... and offers some tips for those tempted to follow in his footsteps

Why Britons still dig for vegetables

This is probably the only time of year I could find the time to write this. Admittedly, there is plenty of time-dressing to be done, rough autumn digging to be forking over, and seed beds to be prepared. And any day now the *Helix aspersa* (garden snail) will be gathering its forces for a spring offensive, when it will venture out once more upon its single foot, intent on inflicting nocturnal GBH on unwary cabbages. But these are still the last few weeks before the warmer weather arrives, when the vegetable gardener can spend some guiltless time away from the plot.

I am an allotment holder, one of that band of enthusiasts who believe that they can outdo the farmer at his own game. The 30ft by 80ft plot in question, on the heavy clay of north Hertfordshire, is, in fact, my second allotment, and costs £16 a year to rent. The first was on a hillside in Derbyshire, frustratingly situated to catch the first of the autumn frosts and the last of the winter blizzards. It was a tough initiation into vegetable growing — anyone who could grow anything more exotic than grass there would have little trouble in the softer south.

I took on that first allotment during the 1970s in a fit of enthusiasm shared with thousands of fellow fans of Richard Briers in *The Good Life*. What better way, we argued, for the suburban male to assert himself than to rent a few poles of land (most of us out on the allotments have never adopted that new-fangled metric system, you know), and there to grow and gather.

The *Good Life* was, of

course, a fantasy, but it did inspire many of us to take up a hobby which has improved our leisure and enhanced our diet and bank balances.

We were, probably unknowingly, following an ancient tradition. There were allotments even in feudal times, although you might then have found yourself forbidden by your liege lord to dig, or even visit, your land on the sabbath, or to grow flowers. In the 19th century, they were a means of providing the indigent poor with sufficient sustenance to keep out of the workhouse. And by the First World War, when half the nation faced starvation, they were a matter of life and death for thousands of families.

Between the wars enthusiasm for the allotment waned, and it increasingly took on a cloth-cap image, which it has still not thrown off. Then, in the Second World War, there was an astonishing outbreak of horticultural enthusiasm as the nation was enjoined to become self-sufficient in food. By the closing days of the war, potatoes, cabbages and sprouts were flourishing throughout the royal parks and more than one million people were "Digging for Victory".

Today, there are perhaps 400,000 allotments being worked in England and Wales, according to Geoff Stokes, of the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG). He believes the fall in numbers is due not so much to lack of interest as demand for development land from builders and local councils. There has been particular pressure on sites once regarded as sacrosanct since 1980, when, under the Local Government Planning and



David Blundell on his 30ft by 80ft allotment in Hertfordshire, which costs £16 a year to rent from the local council and provides most of his family's vegetables — and great pleasure

Act, councils were given the right of disposal over statutory allotments.

If you decide to take up the challenge of an allotment, here are a few ground rules. Look for a site with level, deep,

workable soil. Make sure it has an open aspect and good drainage — vegetables hate the shade, and they detest having their roots in standing water. If the site is being worked, check that the plants

are in good condition. And if it is not tenanted, what state are the weeds in? A happy weed means healthy soil.

If possible, make sure you have good neighbours. A neglected, weed-infested plot next door will inevitably be a source of pests. I speak, unfortunately, from experience.

Ask about theft and vandalism in the area: these have been increasingly in the news recently as enraged allotment holders have dealt out summary justice at gunpoint. But thieving is nothing new — last year I lost perhaps 10 per cent of my crops, including a complete row of cabbages in one night.

Expect to pay from £8 to £16 a year in rent, probably to a local council, which own most sites. According to Mr Stokes, it is possible to rent land in South Wales for £4, while greedy London boroughs may demand as much as £50. Just as important as the cost are facilities — standpipes and stout perimeter fencing may make it worth a premium.

When you have selected your plot, what next? Unless you already have a garden, you will need some basic tools. It is probably safe to ignore most of the hype on the advertising pages of gardening magazines. Nobody needs a stainless-steel dibber when they have an old spade shaft to hand, and your leeks certainly won't know the difference.

Essential tools are: a fork, trowel, rake, Dutch hoe (the sort with a cross-blade attached to two prongs), a length of string attached to two sticks to mark out your rows, a pocket knife and, most importantly, the best-quality spade you can afford. I have seen mechanical Rotavators used but, in my experience, they are suitable only for ground already well cleared. Otherwise they bury the roots and seeds of weeds at a depth ideal for future germination.

The choice of crops is largely a matter of trial and error, according to soil type and climate, but here are some reliable varieties from my own list this year: cabbage — Greyhound, Golden Acre, FI Advantage, Ormskirk Rear-guard; carrot — Autumn King; cauliflower — All the Year Round, Dok, Walcheren Winter Thanet; leek — Musselburgh; lettuce — Webb's, Winter Density; onion — Bedfordshire Champion, Senshyu Yellow (for summer sowing, maturing the next July); tomato — Gardener's Delight; turnip — Golden Ball; parsnip — Tender and True; brussels sprout — Bedfordshire Filling; broad bean — Aquadulce, Hylion; dwarf French bean — Safari, The Prince; runner bean — Butler.

A huge range of potatoes is available, but it may be best to stick to first-earlies in order to avoid the depredations of slugs. My choice would be Epicure and Sharpe's Express. The winter months, when it

is too wet to venture out to your plot, can be some of the most rewarding, for it is then that you can sit in an armchair and absorb the wisdom of great gardeners such as Brigadier C. E. Lucas Phillips, author of *The Small Garden* (Pan Piper). This was my first gardening book and it has probably never been bettered for easy-to-follow, no-nonsense advice throughout the gardening year. Unfortunately it is now out of print, but can still be found in second-hand bookshops. If you see a copy, don't hesitate, buy it.

Second choice would be the excellent *Expert* series, by Dr D. G. Hessayon (Transworld Publishers, 61-63 Uxbridge Road, London W5 5SA, £4.99). *The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners*, Odell House, Hunter's Road, Corby, Northants NN17 5JE (01536 266576), publishes a quarterly magazine and offers seed to members at a discount of up to 50 per cent. Individual membership costs £6.45 a year, group membership, 44p per member.

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UK WIDE
DELIVERY

Gardens to visit

□ Hodsock Priory, Blyth, Nottinghamshire (01909 591204)

On B6045 Blyth to Worksop road, two miles from A1. Open daily throughout February, weekdays 1pm-4pm, weekends 10am-4pm. Thereafter open April 1 to July 30 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Adults £2, accompanied children free.

Hodsock Priory has made a speciality of opening throughout February for its impressive display of snowdrops. The five-acre garden is on a site recorded in the *Domesday Book* and the snowdrops have spread into drifts along the banks of the old moat which forms part of the garden boundary and in the woodland beyond formal terraces and lawns. There is also a wide variety of other early spring flowering plants: carpets of yellow anemones and pink and white cyclamen, hellebores and delicate Irish reticulata, and flowering shrubs such as scented *Viburnum fragrans*.

□ Hill House, Landscope, Ashburton, Devon (01803 762273)

House was vicarage next to Landscope church, reached via A384 Totnes-Buckfastleigh Road. Open daily 11am-5pm. Free.

Hill House's garden was made famous in the writing of the distinguished gardens author Edward Hyams, who died in 1975. The present owners have spent more than a decade restoring the garden while at the same time expanding into a commercial nursery. Snowdrops and cyclamen carpet the ground beneath an ancient cedar. Architectural features include a fine conservatory and a temple.

□ Painswick Rococo Garden, The Stables, Painswick House, Painswick, Gloucestershire (01452 813204)

Just outside Painswick on the B4073. Open Wednesday to Sundays, 11am-5pm. Adults £2.50, children £1.25.

This delightful rococo garden is a triumph of restoration, carried out over a number of years by the owners Lord and Lady Dickinson, and recently completed. The blueprint for the restoration was a 1748 painting of the landscape by Thomas



Castle Ashby Gardens is one of Capability Brown's finest landscapes

Robins done at the time of the garden's creation. The woodland walks which reveal a series of delightful buildings, are enjoyable at any time of the year, but in February and March have the added bonus of the now renowned wood carpeted with naturalised snowdrops.

□ Castle Ashby Gardens, Castle Ashby, Northamptonshire (01604 696234)

Five miles east of Northampton between A45 and A428. Open daily 10am to dusk. Adults £2, children £1.

One of Capability Brown's finest landscapes — laid out during his most productive years in the 1760s and early-1770s — provides the setting for the originally Elizabethan house. Purists would say that Italianate terraces, added during the early Victorian period, intrude into Brown's plan. But recent restoration of the terraces and their planting by the Marquess of Northampton (whose family built the house and have lived there ever since) is something to be admired in the summer. At this time of year, walks through the expansive acres that Brown so skilfully planned, with lakes, architectural features, and carefully positioned trees, lead through a succession of early

bulbs and woodland flowers such as anemones, snowdrops, wood anemones and celandines.

□ Greenbank Garden, Clarkston, Glasgow (0141 639 3381)

Six miles south of city centre, on Flinders Road, Clarkston. Open daily all year, except December 25-26 and January 1-2, 9.30am to sunset. Adults £2, children £1.

Garden enthusiasts tend to visit Greenbank during the summer to enjoy the traditional Scottish fruit and flowers mixture in the walled garden to the south of the 18th-century house. The walled garden has been planted to assist the practical demonstrations that take place. But in early spring it is most interesting to see how the area is structured all year, for instance by the rondel of Yew hedges around the central sundial. Outside the walled garden, snowdrops and other early spring bulbs along the woodland walk make this area especially enjoyable, and show how the garden provides an idyllic year-round retreat from the Glasgow conurbation that surrounds it.

GEORGE PLUMPTRE

PROPERTY

13 3

The Buccaneers was filmed at this house — as was an Agatha Christie. Film and TV companies are always on the lookout for locations



The house that found stardom

When Brigitte Rigby, a film location manager, was searching for a suitable property to feature as Runnymede Cottage in the BBC's £5 million drama *The Buccaneers*, a lock-keeper on the river Test in Hampshire led her to Houghton Lodge.

Ms Rigby's brief was to find a riverside property devoid of modern landscaping at which to film Edith Wharton's story of high society in the 1870s.

"After months on the phone to the National Rivers Authority I finally tracked down the lodge, and as soon as I saw it, I knew it was what we wanted," she says. Last May she visited Captain Martin Busk and his wife, Anthea, at their home in Stockbridge to ask permission to use the eight-bedroom "cottage orné", probably built around 1798 and first described in *The Times* in 1801, when the house was put up for auction. The white-walled building with its arched, gothic-style windows would provide a dramatic backdrop for the story of four young American belles launching them-

selves on to the London Season.

"The house has been used before, in Agatha Christie's *Murder at the Vicarage*," Capt Busk says, "but this new film was a much larger project that involved changing the property to suit the period."

At the beginning of July, furnishings were removed from four ground floor rooms. The sunny-yellow walls were covered with heavily patterned William Morris wallpaper, and vanloads of Victorian furniture and bric-a-brac were installed. Electricians removed sockets, and the radiators were boxed in and covered with wallpaper to hide them. All traces of contemporary life vanished. "A section of our home was transformed from a traditional English house to a dark, oppressive place filled with clutter," Capt Busk says.

Outside, a painted screen was erected at first floor level to cover a modern awning, and a fence was dismantled. Any "20th-century" plants were removed from the gardens, and even stray stinging nettles were dug up so that the barefoot actresses could dance safely around the lawns. The grass was



Houghton Lodge, location for BBC's *The Buccaneers* starring, left, Connie Booth (Miss March) and Cherie Lunghi (Laura Testvalley)

left to grow for a month before the start of filming to obliterate any giveaway lawnmower stripes.

The only evidence that remains of the two weeks' filming is a ramshackle wooden jetty, built at the bottom of the front lawn, which the Busks decided to keep. Everything else was restored exactly as it had been. A month after filming finished, there was nothing that told of the 60 crew that had worked there each day. It is now impossible to imagine the two huge electricity generators and Portaloos parked in the drive, or the catering van that supplied a double-decker bus full of hungry workers.

"At any one time, there were up to 20 people in one room filming a particular scene," Capt Busk says, "but it really was no trouble at all. The crew were totally self-sufficient and didn't rely on us for anything, except a water supply. We have a separate wing, which we use as our living space, so they didn't interfere with our daily life."

It is this flexible approach by the owners that is essential for a location to work, Ms Rigby says. "You must be prepared for your



The Busks in their restored sitting room after filming

home to be in total upheaval for the duration of filming, but it will all be restored faithfully afterwards — maybe with improvements."

"We thoroughly enjoyed the filming, and would definitely invite them back," Capt Busk says. "Brigitte gave us precise details of the areas she wished to use well in advance, and stuck rigidly to the plans and timescale. Everyone was extremely friendly."

In turn, Ms Rigby describes Houghton Lodge and its owners as

the ideal partnership. "It's not simply about having a grand property," she says. "Rooms need to be large enough to allow a crew the space to film, and the residents — and their neighbours — must place their total trust in us as professionals."

On the cash side, your home could bring in up to £1,000 a day, plus expenses incurred in changing and restoring the property.

"We are always on the lookout for properties of all shapes and sizes, with understanding owners and enough room to park our vehicles nearby," Ms Rigby says. "All those television scenes have to be shot somewhere."

Lights, cameras, action... it could be your house next.

KAREN KAY

CORRECTION

The Worshipful Company of Makers of Playing Cards does not publish a leaflet about English playing cards as incorrectly stated in Weekend on February 4. We apologise for any inconvenience caused to the Company and to our readers.

FACT FILE

□ For your property to be included on the BBC Location List, send photographs of the exterior and interior to: Anne-Marie Baker, Location Facilities, Centre House, Wood Lane, London W12 7RJ.

□ The Lavish Locations agency is constantly searching for new film and television locations. Send interior and exterior photographs of your house, with a covering letter, to: Lavish Locations, 14 Montpelier Row, Twickenham, west London TW1 2NQ (0181-744 2992).

□ For details of other film location agencies, write to the British Film Commission, Level 4, 70 Baker Street, London W1M 1DJ.

□ Never part with any money to be put on an agency's books.

□ A revised edition of the book *Filming and Photography for Historic Houses and Gardens*, by the Historic Houses Association, will be launched on March 23 at the association's one-day seminar for members on the use of property as film locations. The seminar will be held at The Queen Elizabeth II Centre, Westminster, London. For information on the book and seminar, call 0171-259 5688.

□ The gardens at Houghton Lodge, Stockbridge, Hampshire, which feature a traditional kitchen garden and the Hampshire Hydroponicum (where plants grow without soil), are open to the public from March 1 to September 30 on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. 10am-5pm; Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays, 2-5pm. Entry £2.50. The house itself is open by appointment only. For further information, telephone 0264 810177 or 0264 810502.

□ *The Buccaneers*, Sundays on BBC1, 9pm. Tomorrow's episode is the third of five. Each episode is repeated the following Saturday on BBC2, 10pm.

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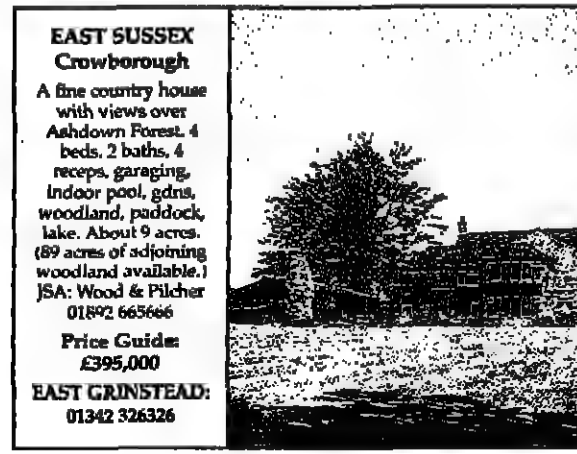
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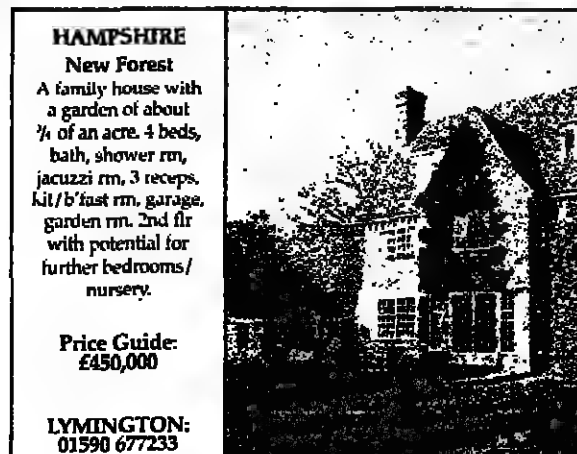
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In a delightful setting, a listed cottage dating from the 16th century. 3 beds, 2 baths, 2 receps, dining hall, kit/b/fast rm, office, 3 car ports, outbuildings, gardens & grounds. About 3 acres.

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OXFORD: 01865 311522



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New Forest

A family house with a garden of about 1/2 of an acre. 4 beds, bath, shower rm, jacuzzi rm, 3 receps, kit/b/fast rm, garage, garden rm, 2nd flr with potential for further bedrooms/nursery.

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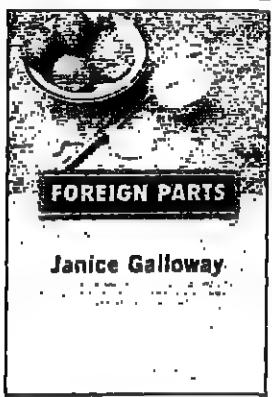


Boyle: a wonderfully absurd satire

THE ROAD TO WELLVILLE

By T. Coraghessan Boyle
Granta, £6.99

It is 1907 and America is in the grip of its first health fad, "biologic living", the brain child of Dr John Harvey Kellogg, inventor of the cornflake and passionate advocate of vegetarianism, enemas and sexual abstinence. Everyone at his exclusive sanitarium worships him — except Will Lightbody, a reluctant patient dragged there by his health-obsessed wife. But the great Kellogg does not tolerate unbelievers and will stop at nothing to protect his power. A wonderfully absurd satire, now an Alan Parker film.



FOREIGN PARTS

By Janice Galloway
Vintage, £5.99

Cassie and Rona go on holiday. Rona's the practical one, umbilically joined to the travelling kettle. Cassie's the dreamer, identifying along the route with medieval cathedral builders and prisoners in the Bastille. Galloway's writing carries a wonderful gust of Scottish frankness, here focused on the joys and irritations of travel and female friendship. Occasional flat patches are outweighed by memorably brilliant descriptive details and a final blast against relationships with men.



THE ELECTRONIC ELEPHANT

By Dan Jacobson
Penguin, £6.99

The writer and literary critic Jacobson returns to Kimberley, the South African diamond-mining town of his childhood, and then takes the famous "road to the north" to the Zambesi and the borders of Zaire. He brings his academic's eye to the nature of colonial identity and, in a witty chapter on David Livingstone, examines the trenchant bigotry of Scotland's most celebrated missionary. Erudite and vividly descriptive, this is a quietly compelling read.

● Nicki Household,
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The discovery of some 300 previously unknown poems by Coleridge, reported earlier this week, is an astonishing literary event, and would be so even if none of these largely occasional verses is judged to be worthy of the genius who wrote the first lines of *Kubla Khan*. Since the sleuth who has so diligently added to what was already a formidable *Nachlass*, Jim Mays, will also be giving us dozens of new readings of the poet's handful of masterpieces (he says *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* exists in more than 100 versions), there can be no doubt that Professor Mays's three forthcoming volumes of the *Collected Works* will consign all older editions of the poetry to the dustbin of scholarship. Coleridge's leading biographer,

Second helping of honeydew

Richard Holmes, must now be saying a silent prayer of gratitude that the second volume of his great *Life* has been so long in the writing that he can still take account of this new corpus of verse from the sage of Highgate's latter years, hitherto supposed to have been philosophically fertile but poetically sterile. In the Somerset village of Nether Stowey, the tiny cottage where the author of *Kubla Khan* was interrupted by the "person on business from Porlock" (and the poem thereby marred) is open to the public. There the find will doubtless boost hopes of creating a permanent study centre for Cole-

ridge, perhaps in one of several other larger houses in the village which have close associations with the poet. Reggie Waters, a learned antiquarian bookseller there, would, I am sure, like to hear from any wealthy individual or organisation interested in supporting such a scheme (Coleridge Books, 11 Castle Street, Nether Stowey, Somerset TA5 1LN).

Apart from his imperishable status as the most wayward and personable of the Lake poets, my



DANIEL JOHNSON

own special interest in Coleridge lies in his role as perhaps the greatest mediator of German literature to the English-speaking world. He was one of the first translators and admirers of Goethe. Schiller and the German romantics and, until Carlyle took over in the 1820s, by far the most distinguished. His own voluminous metaphysical, ethical and critical essays were often inspired by German thinkers. It says much for Coleridge that he, like Germaine de Staël in France,

sensed the importance of this prodigious cultural awakening of a nation even as its landscape was laid waste by the Napoleonic wars. Those who want to follow the absorbing story of the reception of German thought in Britain during the 19th century — which embraces not only Coleridge and Carlyle but George Eliot, Matthew Arnold and several other major writers — should turn to *The German Idea* by Rosemary Ashton. This minor classic of literary scholarship has recently been reissued in paperback by a small publisher called Nicholas Jacobs (Libris, 10 Buryley Road, London NW5 1UE).

Libris specialises in translations of German classics: one recent title is *The Treasure Chest* by Johann Peter Hebel, a delightful collection of stories and curiosities by a contemporary of Coleridge. Hebel wrote poems in the Alemannic dialect of south-west Germany; his nearest equivalent in English might be Robert Burns. As it happens, Penguin has just published the same elegant translation by John Hilder in paperback at £6.99, but the beautiful Libris hardback at £17.95 is worth the extra outlay. Coleridge would certainly have approved of Nicholas Jacobs, but perhaps it is just as well that they lived two centuries apart — otherwise Coleridge might have devoted himself entirely to German literature and written no more verse at all.

Our noblest cross to bear

■ I OWE MY LIFE...
Bloomsbury, £15.99

IT WAS an eye-witness account of slaughter that led to its founding: more than a century later, it is the eye-witness accounts of what the Red Cross has done amid battle and revolution, in famine, floods, hurricanes and disasters and in saving humanity from the charnel house of Bolshevism that testify to its achievement in relieving suffering around the globe.

Some of these snapshots have now been gathered in a book to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the British Red Cross. They make compelling reading: and in an age when humanitarian organisations are jostling for headlines, they are vital evidence that the Red Cross, which has long agonised over the need for discretion when dealing with dictators or bargaining with prison-camp commandants, is still the world's most effective humanitarian agency — even if others hog the limelight and, increasingly, the cash.

Henri Dunant founded the society that was to become the International Committee of the Red Cross after witnessing the horrors of the dying soldiers at the Battle of Solferino in 1859. Though the Romans had hospitals in every fort, the plight of the common soldier was largely ignored until the last century. One Napoleonic surgeon wrote that during the siege of Danzig in 1807 there were 1,600 wounded and 2,000 sick "with not a straw mattress nor a basin nor a nurse between them".

The First World War was the greatest test for the newly founded Red Cross societies.



Red Cross relief in Ethiopia

Percy Douglas, rejected by the army in 1915, worked with the Voluntary Aid Detachments running an ambulance train for three years, taking the wounded "home to Blighty". Freya Stark, the famous traveller, served as a VAD nurse on the Italian front. Their descriptions, and those of the volunteers in the Second World War, show how many owed their lives to the Red Cross. But "peace" also has its horrors: the 1953 East Coast floods, Aberfan and Lockerbie at home, the Hungarian uprising, Zeebrugge, Bosnia and Sudan abroad. The Red Cross was there first, with emergency supplies, tea, humour and comfort.

Contributors include Jeffrey Archer, Nigel Havers, Mary Somers, Viscount Tonyand and Shirley Williams. Their words say much: dozens of archive photographs say more. The book's clear purpose is to raise the Red Cross profile and reverse the downward number of volunteers. It should do both.

MICHAEL BINYON

Peter Millar meets Frederick Forsyth, king of the thriller writers

Of sheep and pen

As Frederick Forsyth sips thin draughts of smoke down the elegant stem of his long, black cigarette holder, there is an unmistakable resemblance between the best-selling master of the modern thriller and the original dean of the genre: Ian Fleming, as immortalised by Cecil Beaton on a billion dust jackets.

The resemblance, of course, is only flash photography-deep. What few people know about FF (as even he refers to himself) is that he spends most of his time nowadays breeding sheep in Hertfordshire. "We have three flocks, altogether 500 ewes and 20 rams. This is the start of the lambing season."

In the genteel surroundings of London's Montcalm hotel, delivered by chauffeur-driven Jaguar, Forsyth looks the perfect picture of the polished gentleman scribbler: posing reflectively in the colonnade, just enough cuff protruding from the sleeve of his gold-buttoned navy blazer. At home on the farm, however, Forsyth drives a modest Rover, a far cry from the days when he drove his white 1963 Silver Shadow Rolls Royce border to the Northern Irish border to the bemusement of a group of Scottish squaddies.

Forsyth's self-imposed Irish exile — an escape from the punitive rates with which the last Labour government forced British stars abroad — created so much publicity at the time that many of his fans assume he still lives there. In fact, he returned from County Wicklow in 1980 after five of the most unproductive years of

his life. Engagingly, he still admits to "hating" writing: "I do it to make a living." He was never tempted to produce an Irish book simply because, he says, too many others had already mined the IRA vein.

Forsyth's own reading time is largely taken up with non-fiction, mostly biographies, much of which provides incidental research material for a future book. But he clearly delves deeply into the competition in his own genre, restraining himself from detailed comment on friends such as "Jeffrey and Tom" (Archer and Clancy) but rubbishing some newcomers such as Alan Folsom (*The Day After Tomorrow*): "Once I saw that the killer had cut his own legs off at the knee so as to disguise his height, and then still performed athletics, I just couldn't read any more." He is equally scathing about the current trend for resurrecting Nazis as villains in a world which is still rich in real baddies.

The end of Forsyth's most recent book, *The Fist of God*, now in paperback (Corgi, £5.99), includes a postscript piece of punditry on the folly of politicians making short-term profits out of selling Saddam Hussein and his ilk high-tech weaponry which they are eventually forced to destroy at much greater cost. "I wrestled with the idea — novelists shouldn't preach — but in the end decided to go with it."

It was not a mistake. Novelists can knock on doors politicians seldom care to open. And with his sales figures, the one thing Forsyth is not doing is preaching in the wilderness.



Frederick Forsyth says he hates writing: "I do it for a living"

Monkey see, monkey do

HUMAN beings have ever consoled themselves for the absurdity of their existence with the ego-boosting thought that they are the highest form of creation. What a piece of work is a man: we alone have consciousness, language, imagination.

Jennie, the delightful heroine of Douglas Preston's novel, has all these things, too. But she is not human, she is a chimpanzee. Furthermore, she has not been anthropomorphised. Everything she does, according to the author, is based on behavioural experiments or the experience of people who have raised chimpanzees at home.

An American anthropologist working in the Cameroon takes a newborn chimpanzee home to Massachusetts, where she quickly becomes the third child in the family, eating at the table, learning to use the lavatory, playing games and watching television. When she is two, a primate researcher teaches her American sign language. Soon, she can ask for things, apologise, swear, lie, and

■ JENNIE
By Douglas Preston
Andre Deutsch, £14.99

"sign" her own name when she sees herself in the mirror. Most poignantly, when asked to sort pictures of people and



Man's nearest relations

animals into human and non-human, she places chimpanzees (but no other animals) among the humans.

Written in the form of "interviews" with the five or six people who knew Jennie best, this is no soppy animal story but an intriguing explo-

ration of the dividing line between man and his closest relative. If chimpanzees can really understand and communicate as well as Jennie, we are much less superior than we think. But the problem with mixing fiction and astonishing fact is that you do not know how much to believe.

However, the human characters are credible and interesting — the "father" whose obsession with Jennie makes him lose all objectivity, the son who accuses his parents of giving the chimpanzee bourgeois suburban values, the local cleric who tries to bring her to Jesus. These people are all deeply affected by Jennie. But, sadly, nobody has considered what will happen when she reaches puberty and can no longer be controlled in a family environment.

When that time comes, she has, as in *Pygmalion*, changed too much to be able to go back to what she was before. Full of humour and irony, this story is all the more moving for not milking the sentiment.

NICKI HOUSEHOLD

White knuckle sandwich

■ INVOLVED
By Kate O'Riordan
Flamingo, £5.99

Kate O'Riordan brings Eamon chillingly to life in the opening pages of *Involved*. He slaughters a puppy which he has charmingly fondled only moments before he has shaming, prudish sex with a local prostitute: he gets bossed about by his mother, a domestic tyrant who knows a good way to get bloodstains out of her son's clothing.

O'Riordan captures the shabby, desperate unease of Belfast with bleak conviction. Not entirely successfully, she

veals bitter secrets: her shallow, over-lipped mother is a drunk who hates her only daughter and, after her husband's death, refuses to let Kitty come home. The girl becomes ever more obsessively dependent on Danny, which brings her into conflict with the murderous claims of his family in Belfast. This puts a mark on her life, so harrowing in its harsh logic, that it turns your knuckles white.

As well as Eamon there are other hauntingly well drawn characters: Monica, a jaunty ruin of a woman, keeping herself just this side of death on booze and Valium; the maimed boy who is one of Eamon's victims; Kitty's mother, a study of quiet, ladylike derangement. O'Riordan's powerful storytelling icily conveys the horrible ordinariness of evil.

PENNY PERRICK

CHILDREN UNDER 12

Whose bedtime is it anyway?

THE last thing I need in my children's bedtime stories is the kind of knowing archness that is intended to appeal mainly to adults. As if parents did not have loads of books of their own to laugh at without sticking their jokes into children's books, too. Bedtime explanations by tired working parents are often lame and unconvincing, leaving everyone feeling shortchanged. Reading Siobhan Dodds' *Grandad Pot* (Walker Books, £3.99) to my three-year-old, I realised that while the story (a little girl hoodwinks her grandad into thinking she is bringing three friends rather than three stuffed toys for tea) delighted me, my daughter was completely baffled.

Susan Meddaugh gets it right in *Martha Speaks* (Macmillan, £3.99). It is not enough for Martha the dog to learn to talk by eating alphabet soup: she must learn what to say and when. This message is conveyed lightly yet clearly and needed no more bedtime explanations from me.

WE HAVE found over the years that baby board-books are good for levelling up the washing machine but otherwise it is hard to squeeze much entertainment from them. Suzy-Jane Tanner has improved greatly on this with four handbag-sized "chuckles" in soft colours. There are enough busy elephants on each page to provide lots of material for conversation. *Seaside Numbers*, *Teatime Shapes*, *Washday Colours* and *Everyday Noises* are £1.99 each from Hutchinson.

Jacqueline Wilson is another author who is funny without being arch. Beginner readers should look out for *The Dinosaur's Packed Lunch* (Doubleday, £8.99) and *Cliffhanger* (Yearling, £2.99), the latter needing slightly more reading ability; and for fluent readers, *The Bed and Breakfast Star* (Yearling, £2.99). These titles explore the problems of the loneliness of a motherless girl, the agonies of a non-sporty boy with a bullying dad, and the gloomy world of a B & B hotel for homeless families. Aching politically correct? Maybe, but Wilson carries it off with wit and wisdom.

Theresa Tomlinson shows similar respect for her young readers in her historical melodrama, *The Cellar Lad* (Julia MacRae, £9.99). It follows 11-year-old Ben's first days working at a Sheffield steelworks in 1842 against the background of the Chartist marches. Modern children, locked in their ghetto of play, will respond to the idea of an 11-year-old taking his place alongside grown men and assuming total responsibility for an orphaned toddler.

ANTHONY HOROWITZ follows in Roald Dahl's slimy footsteps and *Granny* (Walker Books, £3.99) is bound to be hugely popular. It is nastily funny and blatantly panders to children's natural distaste for old people, with gruesome descriptions of the evil Granny and her cronies. "Ooh, but children love it," I can hear Horowitz fans drooling. Does that make it a good book?

The widely praised *Bully* by David Hughes (Walker Books, £4.99) will now reach a bigger audience in paperback and, by buying it, parents will feel they are tackling bullying: in truth they are getting a rather horrible book whose anti-bullying message is obscured by the sing-songy storyline and nightmare nastiness of the leering animal faces in Hughes's drawings. I cannot explain those away at bedtime.

SARAH JOHNSON

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TRAVEL

17

3

INDIA: Michael Evans, on a cricket-cum-sightseeing tour, is bowled over by the country's contrasts

Hot games and curry for lunch

The best way to see India is with a cricket bat in your hand. The sight of a bat places you on a different level from all the other tourists and backpackers who go to India for their holidays or for spiritual regeneration.

For the Indians, cricket is a religion. Anyone who can flick a wrist with a ball or twirl a bat practises all year round in parks or on dusty sidestreets, trying to emulate their cricketing heroes.

I arrived in Delhi shortly after Christmas for a three-week cricket tour, with a Fleet Street XI of varied abilities.

Hitting Delhi at three o'clock in the morning with a party of 20 people and 35 pieces of luggage proved an ordeal. But the excitement of arriving in India for the first time overcame all logistic difficulties. The smells, the noise, the rush of coolies begging baksheesh for even touching your trolley, this was the India we had all read about.

The cricket provided an insight into a different world. Every match followed the same pattern. We started early, and at about 12 o'clock men in black jackets would place tables close to the boundary and cover them with white tablecloths and half a dozen large stainless-steel tureens. Soon there would be the smell of curry and chapatis cooking. With one side's innings completed, we would all troop over for a curry buffet — wonderful for the taste buds but less inviting for those suffering from Delhi belly.

No one goes to India, even dedicated cricketers, without visiting the Taj Mahal at Agra.

Built by the Mogul ruler Shah Jahan for his second wife, Mumtaz Mahal, it took 22 years to complete and involved 20,000 engineers. Shah Jahan kept 400 concubines in the nearby Red Fort, but his wife was his real love. Our guide told us: "You know, a Muslim could have four wives. Actually, this is the same today, although it depends on patience and the pocket, isn't it?"

You need to see the Taj early



Fleet Street team in Delhi

In the morning, when mists envelop the mighty onion dome. The effect makes the marble monument seem almost fluffy, so delicate that it could lift into the air and float away. By midday, however, in the hot sun, it is solid and huge and totally dominating. Shah Jahan ruled that nothing was to be built behind the Taj so that it would remain an unrivalled memorial to his beloved second wife. That sensation of eternal space beyond the Taj survives to this day.

After four cricket matches in Delhi, on pitches that were hard and unrelenting, we set off by train to Jaipur, the city painted pink every year in

memory of a visit by Prince Albert in the 1870s. Getting on and off the train was like threading through a riot. The 35 pieces of luggage were carried, in one go, on the heads, shoulders and arms of only five coolies, all of whom had the same wiry frame as the rickshaw riders, whose muscled, stick-like legs bicycled up and down hills with comparative ease whether they were bearing one, two or three tourists.

The train arrived in Jaipur at 5am. The contrast with Delhi, with its wide boulevards and desperate poverty strung along so many roadsides like decaying washing, was startling. Jaipur has brightly coloured turbans, pink buildings and sumptuous countryside dotted with summer palaces of former maharajahs, and the cows, which are regarded as sacred beasts, seem better integrated.

In Delhi, there are an estimated 17,000 cows wandering around, mostly ignored by the inhabitants. In Jaipur, smaller and more contained within old city walls, the cows window-gaze, snuffle among the cabbage and fruit at the greengrocers and generally merge in with the throng of people. Morris Ambassadors, taxis, bicycles, rickshaws, camel-drawn carts, scooters and *Mad Max* buses — fear-some-looking, three-wheeled vehicles with huge, brightly painted bonnets, always overflowing with customers and belching black smoke. In Jaipur and at our next three stops — Madras, Bangalore and Bombay — we were treated as honoured guests of Indian cricket-lovers. Spon-



Elephants and their attendants wait patiently in the hot sun to greet tourists at the Amer Fort near Jaipur

sored by the Indian foreign ministry, which was so determined to ease our path through the country with the minimum of bureaucratic fuss that it delegated an ever-smiling official to accompany us, we soon became accustomed to the tradition of presenting us with gifts at the end of each match. Local dignitaries greeted us and talked of the shared love of cricket.

In most of the cities we visited we stayed at five-star hotels, the most romantic of which was the Jai Mahal in Jaipur, a former summer palace with luxurious gardens. But in Bombay, the home of Indian cricket, we stayed at the

famous Cricket Club of India (CCI), an Art Deco-style private club which includes a Test match stadium. In the morning and early evening, the members, mostly of the older generation, go for their constitutional around the stadium and then sink into cane basket chairs in the outfield and order drinks: a world away from the streets around the corner where tens of thousands of Indians push and shove and sell, and where beggars appeal in vain for rupees. Three weeks of cricket in India was tough, but it was not without its rewards. The final tally in matches was: played 13, won 8, drew 1, lost 4.

Tour details

□ The Fleet Street XI's cricket tour was sponsored by the Indian ministry of external affairs, which subsidised the Air India return flights. Internal flights were booked via Travelpack (01159 424442). Economy class flights with Air India. Heathrow-Delhi return, cost from £700, rising to £770 between July 1-August 31.

□ The hotels — the Hyatt in Delhi, Jai Mahal in Jaipur, Residency in Madras and Oberoi in Bangalore — were booked individually. In most cases, the cost of a hotel room will be included in an overall package.

□ Companies specialising in sporting tours include John Snow Travel (01293 543185), Mike Burton Sports Travel (01452 419666) and Gullivers Sports Travel (01684 293175). Packages include flights, accommodation, internal travel and help with arranging sporting fixtures and social events. Cost depends on destination, group numbers, length of stay, accommodation and sight-seeing requirements. The most popular touring sports are cricket, rugby, hockey and golf. Tours to Britain for foreign clubs can be arranged.

□ If fixtures are already in place, companies such as Abercrombie & Kent Travel (0171-730 9600), Hayes and Jarvis (0181-748 0088), and Cox & Kings (0171-873 5002), can arrange packages around them.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 23

ARGAND

(b) A diagram used for the graphical representation of a complex number, an eponym from the surname of Jean Robert Argand, a French mathematician (1768-1822). "In an Argand diagram, there are two perpendicular axes on one of which real numbers are represented and on the other pure imaginaries, thus providing a frame of reference for graphing complex numbers."

DECAUDATION

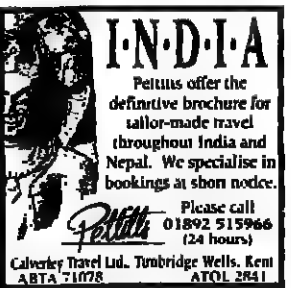
(c) Removal of the tail or "tails". From the Latin *de-*, privative + *cauda* a tail. "The decaudation and blanching and unsundering of the waiter are another phase of the transformation which abolished the frock-coat and the silk hat and women's hair."

FORB

(c) A herbaceous plant of a kind other than grass: applied chiefly to any broad-leaved herbs growing naturally on grassland. From the Greek *phorbos* fodder, forage + *phorbein* to feed. "Forbs such as the clovers, flares, dandelion, and cow parsley contribute in no small way to the hay and pasture crops."

ANGAREB

(b) A stretcher or light bedstead used by Arabs, and in Egypt and the Sudan. The native name, "Camels heavily laden with angarebs transversely placed and resting on the flank upon a huge box."



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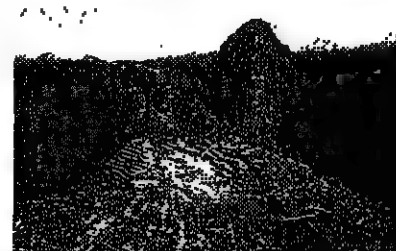
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L I N E

18

TRAVEL

FRANCE: Follow in the brushstrokes of Van Gogh and Picasso, and wonder at the beauty that inspired their work

Provence, a natural work of art

Provence is a painter's paradise. Even if you do not want to take your brushes, you can tour in the tracks of the world's most famous artists and see some stunning scenery at the same time. What brought the artists here? The quality of light, the sunflowers, lavender and sunshine — all the things that make holidays here so appealing.

The future of modern art lies in the South of France," said Van Gogh when he moved there in 1888. Obsessed by the artist's Hokusai, he felt that the mountainous landscape of Arles was closer to his fantasy of Japan. And Arles is the place where the winner of last year's *The Times* Pauline Hallam Memorial Award painting competition, Anne Ambler, has chosen to spend her prize holiday at the Hotel Atrium.

Many of the places depicted in Van Gogh's work have disappeared, but Arles is still a wonderful town for painters. The famous bridge has gone, but the café he painted has been restored, and the hospital in the rue du President Wilson is now the Espace Van Gogh. Get a copy of *Promenade sur les Lieux Peints par Van Gogh* from the tourist office then head for the slopes of the jagged Alpilles, with its olive trees and cypresses, where some of his most famous works were painted. Choose one of the *Grand Randonnées* (marked footpaths), which will take you into the heights, and to the curious ruined village of les Baux.

Now drive east to Aix-en-Provence, where Cézanne lived and painted at the turn of the century. Take the *Circuit*

Cézanne, visit his studio first, then make for the open countryside to Mont Sainte Victoire, which dominates the landscape. Cézanne was obsessed by this mountain and painted it in hundreds of ways. It looks very different today after being ravaged by a forest fire but is still eminently paintable.

Sainte Victoire is where Picasso lived and is buried, at the château at Vauvenargues

They captured the harsh light and violent colours in vermilion, cobalt and viridian

on its northern slopes. The gates are bolted and on them is a scrawled message: "The museum is in Paris". But from a café nearby you can see into Picasso's garden.

From here, head for the Côte d'Azur through the wild countryside of the Var. Although Picasso seldom depicted the landscape, preferring the hill-top village of Mougins and Vallauris, where he made his pottery, he did draw on its stark landscape.

Finally, wind your way down to Antibes, and the Château Grimaldi, with its breathtaking views across the bay, where Picasso had a studio (now a museum, housing a collection of his works).

On the colourful Riviera you are in Bonnard country. Bonnard lived at le Cannet, just above Cannes where, give or take a high-rise flat or two, you can capture an overview of the bay that he painted in high-toned but delicate colourings.

From here it's a short drive to Nice, where Matisse made his home and where you can see the world's largest collection of his drawings. Don't miss the chapel he decorated at Vence, nearby.

When Matisse first came to Provence he headed for St Tropez and the Estérel mountains, painting his masterpiece *Le Bonheur de Vivre* there in 1904. He and his fellow Fauves, the "wild beasts" Derain, Vlaminck and Marquet, settled on this part of the coast, capturing the harsh light, the umbrella pines and the violent colour with vivid canvases in vermilion, cobalt and viridian. They were joined briefly by Braque, who flirted with Fauvism before becoming a cubist. The Estérel mountains today offer the same wild colour.

Away from the crowded coastline, the Luberon, east of Avignon — with its scrub-covered mountains, cherry blossom in spring, poppies, lavender fields and vines — is untouched by time and has hosted many famous artists, notably Chagall who lived on the slopes of the spectacular village of Gordes. It's a good place today to get away from the crowds and paint in peace.

Don't miss the staggering red-ochre cliffs at Roussillon, for instance. If they don't make you want to grab a paintbrush, nothing will.

HAZEL EVANS



Mont Sainte Victoire by Cézanne. The mountain dominates the landscape. Cézanne was obsessed by it and painted it in hundreds of ways

How to get there

To get a Provence Fact Pack, write to: French Tourist Office, 178 Piccadilly, London W1V 0AL (enclosing £1 in stamps towards p&p), or phone 0891 244123 (calls are charged at 40p per minute plus 50p at all other times).

Air France's new "Discover France" return fare to Marseilles is £179, direct or via Paris (no 14-day advance booking requirement but visit must include a Saturday night). Flights are also available from regional airports that are

served by Air France. For reservations call 0181-742 6600.

Air France Holidays offers fly-drive packages on scheduled services, and the freedom to explore with Hertz hire cars. Prices start at £202 for weekend breaks (all inclusive for four people in a group A car in high season). Accommodation can also be selected from its brochure. For reservations call 0181-742 3377.

The author owns Arts in Provence, a painting centre in the Luberon. A tutored painting week, with full board costs £350, excluding the air fare to and from Marseilles. Contact Arts in Provence at 8 Rhonda Grove, London E3 5AP (0181-981 6771).

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HALF TERM 19

Where to take the children

LONDON

Snow White and the Dwarfs: New production based on the Brothers Grimm story using a variety of puppet forms.
Polka Theatre for Children, 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon (0181-543 4888). Tues-Fri, 11.15am and 2.45pm, next Sat, 12.30pm, 2.30pm. Ages three to seven. Tickets £3.50. ☎

Oh No, No, Noah: Help Noah to get the animals into the ark before the flood. Also Animals of the Ark art workshops (today, next Sat, 11am-12.45pm, 2.30-4.45pm).
Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood, Cambridge Heath Road, E2 (0181-460 2415). Free. Museum open Mon-Thurs and Sat 10am-5.30pm. Sun 2.30pm-5.30pm. Performances Mon-Thurs, 11am-midday, 1-2pm, 3-4pm. ☎

The Magic Flute: Mozart's opera set in the world of rock stars, penthouses and the environmentally aware. Plus Ten in a Bed, the story of Dinah Price who finds not just the Three Bears, but Simple Simon and Fuss in Boots in her bed.
Unicorn Theatre, Great Newport Street, WC2 (0171-836 3334). Tickets from £4. Ten in a Bed, today, Thurs, next Sat, 11am, 2.30pm. Various performances until April 1. The Magic Flute, tomorrow, Tues, Wed, Fri, and next Sun, 2.30pm and various performances until March 5. ☎

Half-term Workshops: Dance and theatre workshops. Travel under the sea, enjoy storytelling from West Africa, and make your own sock puppet.
Tricycle Theatre, 269 Kilburn High Road, NW3 (0171-325 1000). Mon-Fri, various times, prices and age ranges. ☎

Whale of a Time: Join artists in making a seascape mural featuring whales, porpoises and dolphins.
Natural History Museum, South Kensington (0171-438 9242). Age seven and over. Tues, Wed, Thurs, 11.30am-12.30pm and 2-3pm. Activities free. Adults £5, children £3.50. ☎

CAMBRIDGE
Hiawatha: The story of Hiawatha and his adventures, based on Longfellow's poem.
Cambridge Drama Centre, Covent Garden, Mill Road, Cambridge (01223 327481). Mon, 3pm and 7pm; Tues, 11am and 3pm. Adults £5.50, children £4.50. Ages five-11. ☎

CUMBERIA
The World of Beatrix Potter: Enjoy the sights, sound and smells of Lakeland, see Mrs Topsy-Winkle, Jennie Fuddeluck and Peter Rabbit.
The Old Laundry, Crag Brow,



Step into the world of Beatrix Potter and enjoy the sights and sounds of Lakeland

Bowness-on-Windermere (01534 58444). Open daily 10am-4pm. Adults £2.85, children £1.85. ☎

EAST SUSSEX
Forget Me Not Farm: Fun-packed show based on the television programme with stories, songs, jokes and giveaways.
White Rock Theatre, White Rock, Hastings (01424 781000). Wed, 2.30pm. Ages three to nine. Tickets £4. ☎

KENT
Half-term fun: A chance to meet some of the 80 exotic birds in the aviary and see bird food being prepared in the bird kitchen.
Lands Castle, Leeds. Maidstone (01622 765400). Today, next Sun, 10am-3pm. Adults £5.50, children £4.50. Admission to castle is an extra £1.50. ☎

Holiday Fun Trail: Experience 2000 years of history, from the Romans fighting the Celts to an air raid in 1943.
White Cliffs Experience, Market Square, Dover (01304 214566). Open daily 10am-5pm. Fun Quiz today, next Sat. Adults £4.99, children £3.50. ☎

SCOTLAND
Inverness Music Festival: Classical and Scottish music, country dancing and songs.
Various venues in Inverness (01463 221718). Competitions today, Mon-Wed; Gala nights Thurs, Fri. Tickets for competitions: adults £1, children 50p; for Gala evenings adults £5, children £3.50. ☎
Star Trek: The Exhibition: Boldly go to the only place in Europe where you can see everything from

the reconstructed bridge of the Starship Enterprise to Mr Spock's trousers. There are fabulous masks, costumes and space ships from the original series, the famous movies and the Next Generation.
City Art Centre, 2 Market Street, Edinburgh (0131-555 1018). Open Mon, Tues and Sat 10am-5.30pm, Wed-Fri, 10am-9pm, Sun 12pm-5pm. Admission adults £3.50, children £2. ☎

TYNE AND WEAR
Festival of Art: Make your own pots (today, 10.30am-midday, 1.30-3.30pm). Please book! Design a Magical Mask (Tues and Wed); Calligraphy Day (next Sat); South Shields Museum and Art Gallery, Ocean Road, South Shields (0191-456 8740). Museum open Tues-Fri, 10am-5.30pm; Sat 10am-4.30pm; Sun 2-5pm. Free. Sessions 50p. ☎
Creepy Crawlies: Meet Scorpions from Gladiators who will be opening the exhibition on Mon (12.30-3.30pm). See the monster beasts, visit the model kitchen and the garden shed.
Hancock Museum, Barras

Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne (0191-222 7418). Exhibition open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 2-5pm. Adults £3, children £2. ☎

WALES

Rainforest Action: Learn about rainforests and help to build one.
Ty Mawr Country Park, Cae Gwilym Lane, Cefn Mawr, Wrexham, Chwyd (01978 822780). Tues-Thurs, 2-4pm. Charge 20p. ☎

Starry-eyed: Make your own constellation light box and then see the real thing.
Minera Lead Mines and Country Park, Wern Road, Minera, Wrexham, Chwyd (01978 751330). Workshop: Wed 2.00-4.00pm. Free. ☎ Trek: Thurs 8.30-9.30pm. Free.

WEST MIDLANDS

Sandwell Valley Environment Playscheme: A three-day playscheme with a space theme.
RSPB Sandwell Valley, Great Barr, Birmingham (0121-358 3013). Wed-Fri 10am-3.30pm. Booking essential. £2 per day. Ages five to 11. ☎

Magie Circus: Traditional circus skills and magical illusions.
Netherton Arts Centre, Netherton (01894 250333). Thurs 2pm, 7pm; Fri 11am, 2pm. Adults £1.50, children £2.50. ☎

WEST SUSSEX

Half-Term in Hawaii: Make pop-up volcanoes and garlands. Plus storytelling and volcano experiments.
The Arundel Wildlife and Wetlands Centre, Mill Road, Arundel (01903 883355). Centre open daily 9.30am-4.30pm. Activities Mon-Fri 1-4pm (charges for materials only). Adults £3.95, children £2. ☎

Badger and Badger in the Mad Mash One: Trouble, chaos and madness plus mashed potato and messy audience participation.
Pavilion Theatre, Marine Parade, Worthing (01903 320500). Tues 2pm. Ages four to 10. Tickets £4. ☎

George and his Marvelous Medicine: Roald Dahl's boy hero needs a special medicine for his grumpy granny.
Gardner Centre, Brighton (01273 685861). Tues-next Sat 6.30pm; Thurs-Sat 2.30pm. Adults £5, children £4. ☎

YORKSHIRE

Jorvik Festival: Re-enactment of medieval family life (today, tomorrow, 10am-4pm, Barley Hall, Coffee Yard, off Stonegate, adults £3.50, children £2.50). Working crafts gallery (today-Fri, 9.30am-5pm, Hospitality, Museum Gardens, adults 70p, children 30p). Scandinavian dancing (today, tomorrow, 1-4.45pm, 2.15-3pm, Coppergate Centre, free). Every-day Viking life for children (Mon-Fri, 10.30am-3.30pm, Houghgate village, Coppergate Square, free). Other events at venues in York (01904 643211). Until Sat. ☎

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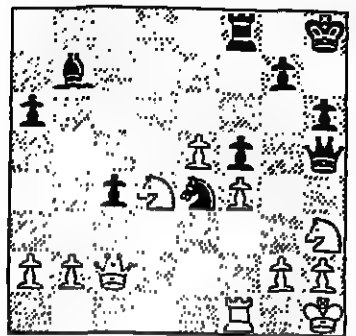
SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

Chess

by Raymond Keene

The sparkling sacrificial conclusions to games created by Alexander Alekhine never fail to exert an imaginative pull. Two more of his masterpieces have formed the topic of intense reader scrutiny.

The Winning Move position for January 2 was from Torres-Alekline, Seville 1922. How did Alekhine, Black and to play, finish the game with a brilliant coup?



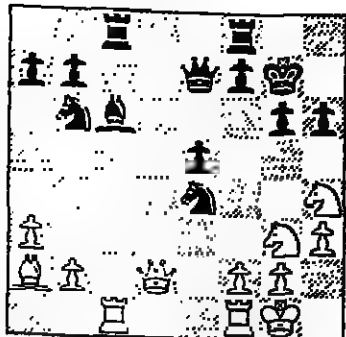
Solution: 1... Qxh3! 2 gxf3 Nf2+ 3 Kgl Nxd3 mate.

E. Webster of Lancashire and Philip Greaney of Buckinghamshire both suggest that White would do better to decline the knight with 2 Rf3, following up with Qxc4. However, in that case, Black would be a piece ahead, which is comfortably sufficient to win the game at international level.

There is, in fact, one further neat point. After 1... Qxh3 2 Rf3 Qh5, White cannot immediately capture with 3 Qxc4, as this allows 3... Ng3+, winning further material, as 4 Rxc3 allows 4... Qd1-mating.

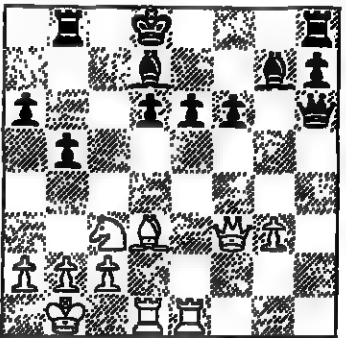
The position from Winning Move for November 29 last year is a variation from the Alekhine-Capablanca, Buenos Aires, 1927.

Here we see a might-have-been from the final game of the marathon match which first crowned Alekhine as World Champion. White has a chance to break through the black defences with an elegant combination. Can you see it?



Solution: 1 Nh5! gxf5 2 Nxf5+ Kf6 3 Qxh6+ Kd5 4 g4 mate. After 1 Nh5+, if 1... Kf6 then 2 Qxh6 is extremely strong, but Richard Beetham of Harrogate points out an interesting alternative: 2 Rxc6! Rxc6 3 bxc6 leads to the same thing! 3 Nxf5+ Kxf5 4 g4+ Kxf5 5 f3 checkmate. Well done, Alekhine would have approved.

Now I turn to a game from John Nunn's collection of his best games. The January 16 Winning Move was from Nunn-Chandler, London, 1985. At first sight, it appears that it is Black's king that should give him the greatest concern, but in fact it is another feature of Black's position that brings about his downfall. How did White continue?



Solution: 1 Rh1! Qg5 2 Rh5 traps the black queen. Richard Tindall of Cambridge suggests that at the end of the solution, Black could try 2... Bc6, counter-attacking against the white queen. This is a good try, but it fails to 3 Qxc6 Qxh5 4 Qxd6+ Kd8 5 Qc6+ Kd8 6 Bc2+, when the black queen is lost.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

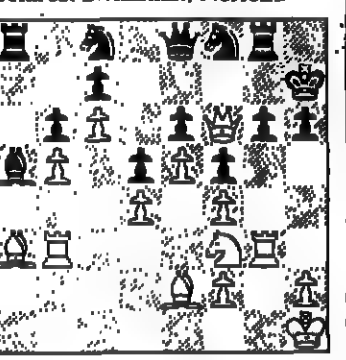
This position is from the game Glek - Kersez, Bad Godesberg 1995.

White has gained space all over the board and now needs to open a line on the kingside to finish off the game. How did he achieve this with a neat tactic?

Send your answers on a postcard to The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first three correct answers drawn on Thursday will win a British Chess Magazine publication. The answer will be published next Saturday.

Last week's solution: 1 Qc8

Last week's winners: G Maney, Ashford, Kent; D P Moore, Caterham, Surrey; Dr D G Belasco, Swaffham, Norfolk.



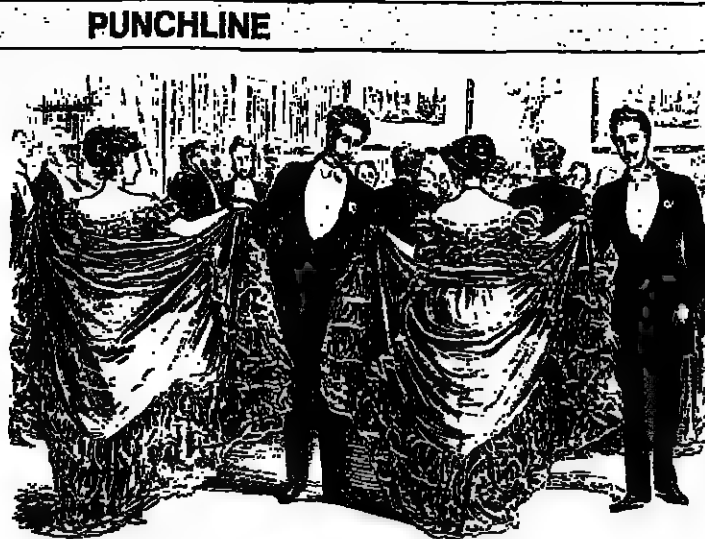
PUNCHLINE

READERS are invited to write an amusing caption for the cartoon on the right. The cartoon, from the Punch library, includes the contemporary caption.

The cartoon will be printed again next week on the Games page with a caption selected from those submitted.

Caption suggestions, on a postcard please, should be addressed to: Cartoon caption 45, Weekend Games Page, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The editor's decision is final.

The closing date for entries is Wednesday, February 22.



Another remarkable study from nature.



The winning caption for last week's cartoon (above) was submitted by R. Gedling, of Epsom.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

ARGAND
a. A silver/brass alloy
b. A mathematical diagram
c. An itinerant fishmonger

DECAUDATION
a. Thawing
b. Voting by tribes
c. Removal of the tail

FORE
a. A confidence trickster
b. To pretend to be ill
c. Herbaceous fodder

ANGAREB
a. A South Sea fish
b. A light bed
c. An Angolan rebel

Answers on page 17

COMPUTER GAMES

AN IMPRESSIVE mailbag for Cyberspace Twelve, in which we asked you to review any new title in your collection, good or bad.

Surprisingly it was Acorn Archimedes' battlefield sim "Canon Fodder" which prompted most reviews. Richard Goddard, of Dudley was, however, the only one to ponder the game's prominent disclaimer of any association with the Royal British Legion. He wrote: "On loading, you are presented with a screen denying any association. I assume that they have done this because of the numerous poppies in the opening scenes and credit screens."

The game has 24 missions, each divided into up to six phases, and the arsenal at your disposal progresses from grenades and bazookas to jeeps, tanks and, ultimately, helicopters. Mr Goddard added that he has yet to fly the latter.

Jonathan Laurence of Macclesfield also raved: "It's packed with impaled and screaming soldiers, civilians about to have their homes destroyed and people being shot just for fun," he drooled. "For each level you get three or four men, an unlimited supply of bullets but a limited supply of other ammunition. It is very hard, but sat-

isfying and meaty," he concluded. The game's sequel, imaginatively entitled "Canon Fodder 2" drew a significantly less enthusiastic response from Jonathan Couper of Cranbrook, Kent. This time the sergeant is informing his men that they have been kidnapped by time-travelling aliens for whom they must now work on a variety of time-skipping missions.

"It is more of the same with a few extras: more traps to hinder and vehicles to help," he wrote. "I'd only recommend it to the die-hard trigger-happy."

Timothy Rudge of Southampton was ecstatic about "Ecstasy", another brutal game, this time from Pygnosis, which he describes as an "interactive manhunt". Here you seek refuge in a remote village and quickly find yourself on the run from murderous demonic creatures. They have already wiped out most of the residents and now they're gunning for you.

"If you are to stay alive for more than a nanosecond you must have your wits about you and move from house to house quickly," he wrote. "A new technique, Ellipsoid Technology, allows the characters to be controlled with unparalleled

accuracy. The game comes on CD-Rom, with the facility to upload some or all of its 70 megabytes to your hard disc, and is an absolute must for any serious games player. "Ecstasy" carried an ELAPSA certification of 18 and I feel that is correct. Although you do not see gushing blood, you do see all the movements associated with the killing of creatures."

At 14, Sunderland's Peter Walsh would have to wait four years until he could play "Ecstasy" but for now he seems happy enough with the budget-priced Shareware version of Apogee's "Whacky Wheels", an animated racing game. "The racers are different animals such as sharks, tigers and racoons. As you race around the tracks, set in desert or marshland, you run over hedgehogs to collect them, which you later fire at opponents. You can also pick up oil and bombs."

Next week we will reveal the names of our six Cyberspace Twelve winners. News and views as usual please, to Computer Games, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN (fax: 0171-729 6791).

TIM WAPSHOTT

BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

WITH more and more books about bridge being published, I have decided to review several volumes that I have recently received.

Step by Step: Constructive Bidding, by Tony Sowter

Although one might imagine otherwise from the title, this is not a beginners' book. It assumes readers are familiar with the basics and sets out to improve their constructive bidding. The author is an experienced teacher and is well aware of the most common problems that intermediate players have with the game. The book addresses such problems, and attempts to put them right. Most average players should find that their results improve considerably after reading this book.

Conventional Bidding Explained, by Freddie North

I think most bridge teaching over-emphasises the use of conventions. For years I have played in rubber bridge games in which the standard is at least as high as, say, the Canrose trials, and yet the bidding used is pretty straightforward. It doesn't go much beyond the take-out double, Stayman and Blackwood. However, if you venture into the duplicate world you will find that the most incompetent of pairs will have convention cards filled to bursting with the most obscure understandings.

For the uninitiated, a first trip to the local duplicate can be a nightmare. Everybody seems to be tapping the table to alert bids which have some meaning other than the obvious. For some it can be so off-putting that they never return. This book attempts to list the most commonplace conventions, and gives a good summary of current practice. The conventions' advantages and disadvantages are discussed and their usage explained. They are also given a star rating from one to five. I'd give most of them 0, but that's another matter.

Play Bridge at Home, by Tony Forrester

This is a beginners' book. It describes how to play the game from scratch. The idea, as the title suggests, is that four people should be able to sit down at home with this book and teach themselves the rudiments of the game.

One of the problems with writing such a book is that there is much that needs to be explained before play can commence. In practice, I feel that the four people concerned would need to have studied the book beforehand, otherwise they would get so bogged down with trying to understand the scoring that they would probably give up and play canasta instead. Nevertheless, if you want to learn the game without the commitment or expense of classes, this is a good way to do so.

These three books are published

by Batsford and each costs £8.99. If you have difficulty getting hold of them, try the Chess and Bridge Bookshop, 369 Euston Road, London NW1 3AR (0171-388 2404) or IPBM Mail Order (0115 9422615).

My main complaint about the Batsford books is that they seem to cost a lot for the amount of material you get. American books are usually cheaper — for example, Bill Roor's excellent *Defensive Bridge Play Complete* (published by Robert Hale) costs £18 and has 400 large pages. The Batsford books cost about half as much for 120-150 much smaller pages — at least twice as expensive per word.

One of the reviews I read of Forrester's book was a little scathing about him taking several lines to describe the play of an AQJx opposite Kx. Those of you who read this column regularly no doubt find it easy, but beginners can get confused.

Better players on automatic can also make mistakes with this combination. In a hand I described a few weeks ago, the declarer had A K J x opposite Q x. When the suit was led, she followed the usual rule of thumb (which I recently saw laboured in an Australian teaching video to such soporific effect that I woke up two hours later) of taking in the short hand to avoid blocking the suit. On this occasion, though, it was correct to block the suit to keep the queen as an entry. It all goes to show, you must not play by rule of thumb, you must treat each case on its merits.

Boris Schapiro tells a story of the old half-crown game at Lederer's Club. A character called Collingwood, a semi-professional player, who, according to Boris, weighed 25 stone (probably nearer 18 stone if you allow for poetic licence) was playing with a formidable lady, Madame de Mesquita. She was one of those players who will not be denied. Collingwood picked up:

♠AQJxxxx ♥xxx ♦xx ♣xx
and this was the auction:
de Mesquita Collingwood
1NT 2♠
2NT 3♠
3NT Resigned Pass

According to Boris, before the opening lead Collingwood ponderously heaved himself to his feet and shuffled round to look at Madame de Mesquita's hand (quite improper). In her hand he saw king doubleton of spades among other assorted aces and kings, so he gave a surreptitious thumbs-up to Boris before returning to his chair.

On winning the opening lead, the declarer set about the spades by leading her small one to the ace. Collingwood once more rose, gathered up the rest of the dummy's cards and threw them through the open window into the street saying: "You won't be needing these mad-ams." If only Forrester's book had been available in those days.

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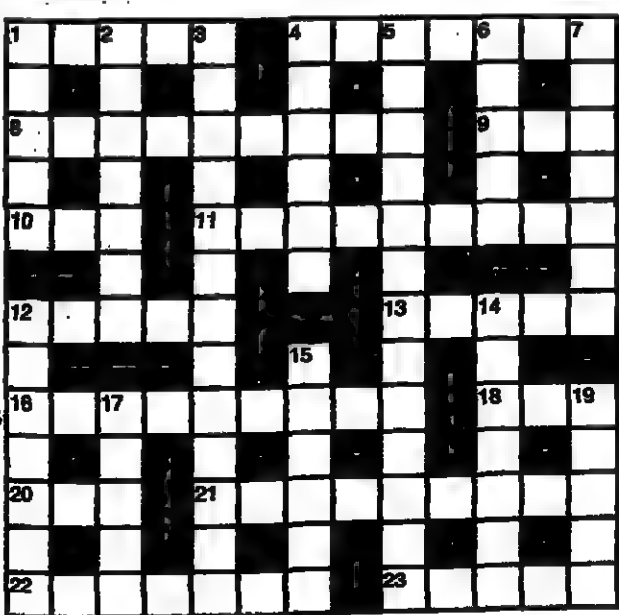
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TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 399

ACROSS
1 Profundity (5)
4 Enchant (7)
8 Fruit: show of disapproval (9)
9 One thousandth of an inch (3)
10 Slide down mountain (3)
11 Peremptorily (3,2,4)
12 Goddess of Love (5)
13 Hurred, rash (5)
16 Deformed (9)
18 Hire out: a replayed serve (3)
20 Princess — (GSS) (3)
21 Lifeless (9)
22 An intellectual (7)
23 Recipient of hospitality (5)

DOWN
1 "Who —, wins" (SAS motto) (5)
2 Strong enthusiasm: anger (7)
3 Take-it-or-leave-it situation (7,6)
4 Upbraid (6)
5 One's customary cast of mind (3,2,3)
6 Florida bay resort (5)
7 Period of recreation (7)
12 Blood-drinker: type of bar (7)
14 Rescue (from destruction) (7)
15 High ground (6)
17 Jargon: non-standard language (5)
19 Sleazing (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 398

ACROSS: 6 Pitch-and-toss 7 Parcel 8 Suborn 9 Dell 10 Manifest 12 Deceit 16 Rope 18 Sporty 20 Chaney 21 Top-heaviness
DOWN: 1 Sticker 2 Shalom 3 Unison 4 Stub 5 Osiris 6 Peace 11 Forsaken 13 Employ 14 Pay-day 15 Tuck in 17 Packs 19 Ruhr

EXCLUSIVE FROM TIMES BOOKS: The Times Guides: English Style and Usage (HB) £8.99, International Finance, Japan, Nations of the World, Middle East, Good University Guide 1994-5, Single European Market 1994-5, Peoples of Europe (HB) £16.99, European Parliament - June 1994 (HB) £26. The New Times Guide to the New British State £17.99, The Times Maps: The NEW Times Guide to the New British State £17.99, The Times 1000 1995 (HB) £33, World (Wall Map laminated) 62"x40" £15.99, (folded) 48"x30" £5.99, Miscellaneous: The Times Night Sky 1995 £4.50, The Times 1000 1995 (HB) £33, The Times Concise Atlas of the Bible (HB) £15.99 (reduced from £15.99), Prices Sunday Times Book of Answers £4.50, Book of Brainiacs £5.49, Prices include P&P (UK). Cheques with order payable to Akom Ltd 51 Manor Lane, London SE12 8NU. Business Mailings: Tel 0181 663 4575. All prices include postage.

THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

No. 3293: Innards, by Machiavelli

The 36 across lights are words formed by removing the first and last letters from a longer word. Each letter of the alphabet has been removed once as a first and one as a last letter. Across clues contain a one-word definition of the light to be entered at that number, but belong as a whole to the longer word (to which the figure in brackets refers) used to form an across light elsewhere. Down clues are normal. One word appears twice in the diagram.

ACROSS

1. Crêpe's name featured in intensive campaign (6)
4. During quiet year, change one's mind once about key arrangement (6)
7. Useful explosive device, for each bags a lot of soldiers (5)
10. Left to reduce acid inside coffin (6)
12. Outer sepal kept in city for a month (6)
13. A sulphide, one at the centre in stupid craze (6)
14. A composer has lost, good willing, just part of investment (6)
15. Back in a cave 1, a king, once sat on the throne (6)
17. Has two short rivers in the interior — that's not worth much (7)
18. More philosophy, note — "Work is money" (7)
20. Most of giant water supply split under Islamic law (5)
21. In the past, touching training

given to Ginny (5)
22. A hundred original curtain-rods are not delivered to the judge (7)
27. Prisoner, one of the numbers held by a number abroad endlessly (6)
30. Sad heart in time stops (5)
32. English club — it's adapted for elder statesmen (7)
34. Craft demands 100 stinkind to carry a letter round (6)
36. Showing distressful signs wrestle inwardly, lacking guts (10)
37. Following a foreign air line on its return course (5)
39. African ruminant, found around Harare initially, goes back to South Africa (5)
41. Poke wing inside hooded cloak (5)
42. The extra bits we brought back to stitch together (7)
43. I see English headgear in polar regions (6)
44. Textile weaving — I belong here (7)
45. Coming round about noon, it's not difficult being together (5)
46. Wast thou in first place, overwhelming the crew that's second heavies? (10)

DOWN

1. Cobras not swimming horizontally (6)
2. I open out and give my view (5)
3. Tree spelt with two letters (4)

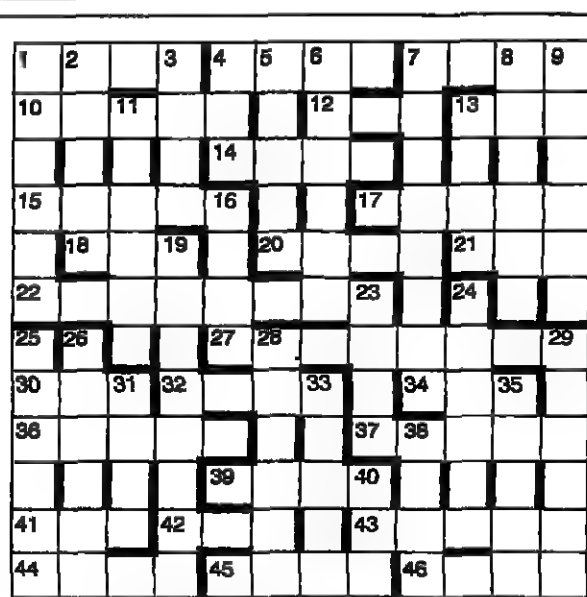
Solution and notes to BR's Home Base by Wolfram, No 3290

This puzzle commemorated the centenary of the birth of (Babe) George Herman Ruth, the American baseball player. He was born on February 6, 1895. The diamond shape of the grid is intended to represent a baseball pitch, and the puzzle is set in base 4; the final base is the game — hence the title. The solver should be able to calculate that with primes of up to 300 the only bases that give a 7 digit figure (2 right) of a square must be those of 5 or less. Then considering 19 (right), which is palindromic, the only solution is 57, which is 121 in base 4. No other base of 5 or lower satisfies this. Therefore the puzzle can be completed using base 4.

SOLUTION: The letters in the clues represent the following primes:

A=47 F=59 L=11 R=17
B=23 G=31 M=7 S=197
C=53 H=73 N=29 T=193
D=83 J=67 P=57 U=13
E=5 K=101 Q=3

The winner was Richard Wilkinson, of Surbiton, Surrey; the runners-up were Hector Barker, of Formby, Liverpool, and Rodney F. Jones, of Colwyn Bay, North Wales.



LISTENER CROSSWORD No. 3293

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

PRIZES: Book tokens worth £50 will go to the winner. The two runners-up will each win £20 book tokens.

ADDRESS: Readers should cut out and send the completed crossword and coupon above, to The Listener Crossword 3293, 63 Green Lane, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 6HE. Entries must be received by Thursday, March 2.

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Fi

Tony Dawe
 how a family
 narrow escape
 has prompted
 safety alterations
 to a best school

Rear-end collisions are the most common type of accident on the roads, but they are also the most preventable. The company which has introduced a new rear-end collision prevention system, the 'Safe Guard' system, claims that it can reduce the risk of such accidents by up to 50%. The system, which is based on a simple principle, involves the installation of a sensor in the rear of the car which detects the presence of a vehicle behind it. If the car behind it brakes, the sensor will send a signal to the car in front, which will then brake automatically. The system is claimed to be particularly effective in preventing rear-end collisions in traffic jams and on busy roads. The company, which is based in the Midlands, claims that the system is the first of its kind to be developed in the UK. It is hoped that the system will be widely adopted in the near future, and that it will help to reduce the number of rear-end collisions on the roads.



The 'Safe Guard' sensor system, which is claimed to reduce the risk of rear-end collisions by up to 50%.

In the meantime, the company is also working on a new system which will allow cars to communicate with each other. This system, which is based on a similar principle to the 'Safe Guard' system, will allow cars to detect the presence of other cars in their vicinity and to adjust their speed accordingly. The company claims that this system will be particularly effective in preventing collisions in busy traffic and on narrow roads. It is hoped that the system will be widely adopted in the near future, and that it will help to reduce the number of collisions on the roads.

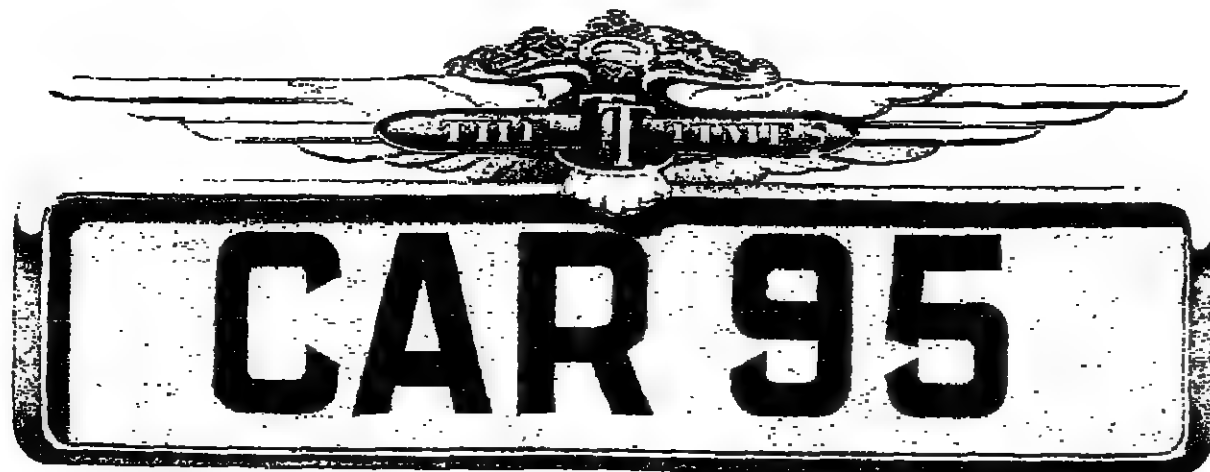
Moreover, the company is also working on a new system which will allow cars to communicate with each other. This system, which is based on a similar principle to the 'Safe Guard' system, will allow cars to detect the presence of other cars in their vicinity and to adjust their speed accordingly. The company claims that this system will be particularly effective in preventing collisions in busy traffic and on narrow roads. It is hoped that the system will be widely adopted in the near future, and that it will help to reduce the number of collisions on the roads.

Go get

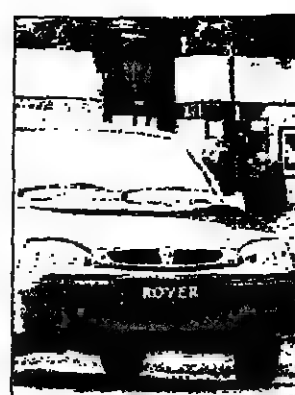
152501



Custom building your new car by computer
Page 2



Rover's little old Granny gets a facelift
Page 10



SATURDAY FEBRUARY 18 1995

4,000 Renault people-carriers called in for checks after Car 95 investigates blazes

Fire mystery Espace recalled

Tony Dawe on how a family's narrow escape has prompted safety alterations to a bestseller

Renault yesterday ordered a recall of the Espace, Britain's bestselling "people-carrier", because of a fault which has caused a series of potentially lethal fires in the past few months.

The company made the announcement following a two-week investigation by Car 95 and pressure from insurance companies, which have paid out on claims because of the fires. It also admitted that the fault was rectified last June but models made before that date have not, until now, been called in for modifications.

The recall affects 4,000 turbo diesels registered between March 1993 and last June. They will be fitted with a fuse in the pre-heating system to prevent short-circuiting, which has occurred because of the proximity of the fuel filter outlet and electrical wiring. The company will contact owners directly but they can take their vehicles immediately to their nearest dealers, all of whom have been alerted to the potential hazard.



A burnt-out case: the wreck of the car from which Andy Croson and his family escaped as it went up in flames on their driveway. They reported the fire to Renault immediately

The Espace, leader in the competitive MPV field

In the worst case discovered by Car 95, Andy Croson, a motorist from Peterborough, escaped with his wife and four young children when the engine compartment in his diesel-powered Espace caught fire. By the time the fire brigade arrived, his 17-month-old vehicle was completely burnt out.

Mr Croson has criticised Renault for the delay in acknowledging the safety problem which "could have put lives at risk". He alerted the company immediately after the fire but said it was more than six weeks before the company asked to inspect the vehicle, and that was after he had contacted The Times and made several calls to his insurance company.

A link between the fires was first identified by the Prudential's senior engineer and reported to colleagues at a secret meeting at the Motor Repair Research Centre. Other companies have since found similarities in cases under investigation and this week called in Renault engineers to help analyse the information. Several fires occurred within minutes of the cars being started in freezing weather, leading to speculation that the fault could be in the pre-heating system. The Espace is currently the bestselling "multi-purpose vehicle" (MPV) in Europe and Britain, where 7,125 were sold last



"It could have put lives at risk": Mr Croson with his wife and children, all in the Espace when it caught fire

year. Prices range from £16,625 for the basic 2-litre RN family model to £27,000 for the automatic luxury version.

It is, however, facing an increasing challenge to its pole position this year, as seven new models are launched in Britain by Ford, Honda, Peugeot, Volkswagen, Citroen, Chrysler and Fiat, all eager to exploit a potential market of 40,000 vehicles a year.

Mr Croson's Espace burst into flames on what he described as "one of the coldest mornings of the winter", December 15 last year. He said: "My wife and four young children were with me but we did not even get out of our

drive before we had to abandon the car because of the awful smell of smoke. Fortunately, we all escaped without injury.

"While I was ringing the AA, a big pall of smoke engulfed the car and neighbours across the road called the fire brigade. The firemen arrived within ten minutes but the car was completely gutted.

"We contacted Renault immediately but the company showed little initial interest in why it had happened. Their concern was whether our insurers wished to pursue the matter.

"Our concern was whether it could happen again but the

next time with deadly results. We have had nightmares about the fire and about the doors jamming when it started. Our six-year-old daughter has woken up crying 'The car's not going to burst on fire again, is it?'

He has replaced the burnt-out Espace with a Volvo 940 estate with an extra rear-facing seat so he can accommodate all the family.

Eight days later, just before Christmas, another Espace went up in smoke in Peterborough. Margaret Lovell had run the engine of her diesel Espace for a few minutes on a

frosty afternoon before reversing up her 25-yard drive and onto a path between the garden and the road to wait for a gap in traffic.

Simon, her husband, said: "At the top of the drive the engine cut out. She tried to restart it but there were no ignition lights, nothing at all.

"It was then that smoke was seen coming out of the bonnet area. She released the inside bonnet catch but could not locate the secondary (safety) one that has to be released outside the vehicle. A passing motorist noticed the smoke and told her to phone the fire brigade, which she did. By the

Continued on page 2, col 1

Safe ways to stifle car fires

Last year they killed 72 people.

Kevin Eason on how to tackle them

CAR fires claimed the lives of 72 people in 1993, according to the latest figures compiled by the Home Office.

Faulty wiring is the chief cause of accidental fires, responsible for more than 9,500 blazes in cars in 1993, the last year for which figures were compiled by police and fire services.

Hot exhausts accounted for another 3,300 of 20,213 accidental car fires that year, while sparks caused another 2,677. Surprisingly, crashes are a minor problem, causing only 869 fires, about twice the number caused by smokers dropping a match or lit cigarette onto flammable seat covers.

Emergency services warn that drivers and passengers must be alert, or risk being trapped in an inferno which can spread through the passenger cabin in seconds, giving off suffocating fumes.

However a blaze may start, fire chiefs warn motorists to be equipped and ready to act within seconds. Brian Cook, assistant divisional officer at the West Midlands Fire Brigade, says motorists should always carry a fire extinguisher, where possible fitted into the footwell or within reach in the cabin.

If a fire breaks out, he says, this is the procedure to follow:

- Pull over to the side of the road and put on hazard lights.
- Turn off the ignition to kill the engine. This will also cut off the fuel injection, which could feed a fire.
- Get everyone out of the car immediately and on to the pavement or, if on the motorway, up on the embankment out of harm's way. Check first that you are not leaping out into the path of oncoming traffic.
- Call the fire brigade immediately and be careful if you decide to tackle the blaze alone.
- Release the bonnet-catch inside the car and funnel the extinguisher into the radiator grille to damp down flames before opening the bonnet completely. Then aim at the source of the fire.
- Wait until the fire brigade arrives so they can check that embers are not still smouldering in hidden compartments, waiting to ignite again.
- Mr Cook added: "Motorists probably do not understand just how quickly a fire can take hold in a car. It can be a terrifying blaze within seconds. They should not start worrying about the fire before everything else. The most important thing is to get the car off the road safely and everyone out and to call the fire brigade."

Makers gear up for price battle

Many popular models will be cheaper this year, reports

Kevin Eason

Carmakers are firing the first shots in a price war that will mean hundreds of pounds being cut from the cost of popular models this year.

The sudden brake on recovery is forcing every manufacturer into an urgent strategy review to win sales in what is likely to be a tough and disappointing market.

That will mean a squeeze on profits for big motor companies — but the bonus of cheap sticker prices and big discounts for buyers.

Honda announced yesterday that its Civic range, made at Swindon in Wiltshire, will start at £11,495, £245 less than the equivalent Escort LX, even though it will have twin airbags, electric sunroof and wood interior trim as standard equipment.

The 1.5i VTEC economy engine car, capable of averaging 45 miles to the gallon, is aimed £640 cheaper than the Escort 1.8 LX turbo-diesel at £11,795.

The pricing is aggressive and aimed at upsetting the balance of power in Britain's motor industry, traditionally dominated by Ford, Vauxhall and Rover. It is, however, just the start of an assault by the home-based Japanese producers and foreign manufacturers bidding for a bigger slice of the lucrative British market, where cars are perceived as being over-priced compared to other European nations.

Seat, the Spanish company owned by Volkswagen, Europe's biggest carmaker, will cut prices on new versions of the Ibiza hatchback by up to £600 soon. The car will also have new equipment, including a driver's airbag, power steering and central locking.

A new, 1-litre version of the Ibiza will sell for under £6,400 and will be joined by two bigger-engine models, including a diesel, which will go into showrooms at less than £8,000. Seat is prepared to back its cuts, which will mean across-the-board pricing with no discounts at dealers, with a television advertising campaign costing more than £5 million.

With 175 dealers, the company sold 13,400 vehicles in 1994, 50 per cent more than during the previous year, to become Britain's fastest-growing new car franchise. It is hoping the new strategy will allow 215 dealers to sell more than 25,000 cars next year.

Seat's move follows an appeal by Professor Garel Rhys, at Cardiff University Business School, for carmakers to help fight inflation by cutting prices. Yet Ford, Vauxhall and Rover have put up prices in the past month by about two per cent. They are now likely to tell dealers to start discounting to combat the attack from Honda and other manufacturers.

Stan Chojai, Seat UK's managing director, said last night: "As a result of the recession, people who use their own money for car purchase want a better deal."

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'There is more profit in £5 worth of sweets, sandwiches and crisps than in £23.80 of unleaded petrol'

Food for thought on the garage forecourt

Pick up a copy of *Dalton's Weekly* and the number of small garages for sale is only outnumbered by examples of that other collapsed dream, the Cornish gusher. Yet the garage forecourt is a prime site for television news reporters in search of disgruntled motorists. Petrol? Too expensive. Garage owners? Millionaires.

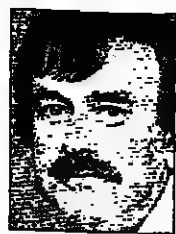
The reality lies less than a mile from my home, where the owner of a small independent garage that is a lifetime to me has given me a rare insight into the workings of an industry that affects all our pockets.

Let us start with an interesting retailing reality. If I buy 45 litres (10 gallons) of unleaded petrol from this garage, it costs £23.80. The gross profit to the garage will be £1.44, or 3.2p per litre. If, while paying for the fuel, I decide to spend £5 on sandwiches, sweets and crisps, the garage's gross profit on that will be £1.50.

So the short answer to my tongue-in-cheek remarks a few weeks back about garages that have become supermarkets is that the smaller ones can't afford to do anything else.

There is more. Garages are encouraged to sign contracts with petrol companies, usually lasting

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

five years. Whereas the profit on sweets etc is based on a percentage of the retail cost, so that profit increases when the price increases, the gross margin in petrol contracts is a money amount — in this case the aforementioned 3.2p, fixed for five years.

No wonder garage owners worry about inflation. My local, after 25 years on five-year contracts, has switched to a two-year deal which is now nearing its end. When he signed it, the 30,000 litres of fuel which he buys 12 times a year was costing about £10,000. Now, with the profit margin unchanged, 30,000 litres

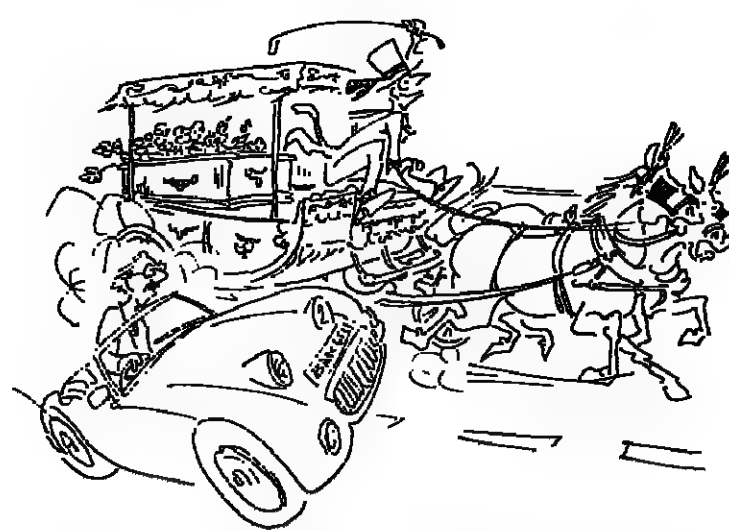
costs him about £14,000. So the cost has risen by 40 per cent while the profit margin has stood still. Obviously, a small business has to overdraw or borrow to raise such sums, so interest charges eat further into the margin.

Compare this with the out-of-town supermarkets, which can buy millions of litres at fixed forward prices, and it is apparent why independent petrol retailers are a shrinking band. In a market economy, it's hard to see what can be done about it, although petrol companies ought to be helping the independents.

They owe motorists that in return for their vast profits, for when my car drops dead I doubt that Mr J Sainsbury PLC will come out and tow it, whereas my local garage will. If it is still there.

A reader asks what has happened to undertaking. I passed the letter to the Obituaries Editor but he has sent it back. Oh, I see... undertaking, as in over-taking on the inside.

This crazy notion was mooted by somebody back in 1993, to considerable publicity. Unfortunately, there was hardly any publicity later when Robert Key, then the Transport



Minister, said that while "opinion was divided" on undertaking, the ministry was against it on road safety grounds.

The trouble is that no sooner had consideration been given to undertaking than sundry lunatics started flying past people on the wrong side of the road, leading to the kind of spectacular crash shown this week on Channel 4's remarkable documentary about driving.

I have just spent an experimental hour in the middle lane of the M4 at exactly 70mph and was undertaken by seven people in that time. Five had to jam on the brakes when discovering lorries in front of them, which is why I was in the middle lane in the first place. The others swung out in front of me. I trust the motorway police will have a blitz on these idiots before they dispatch too many of us to the, er, undertakers.

Fulfilling favourite fantasies

Virtual reality is the new route to the car of your dreams, finds Vaughan Freeman

Car-buyers will soon be able to don computer-linked goggles and enter the fantasy world of virtual reality to conjure up the vehicle of their dreams. Having helped the customer create the ideal car, the dealer will then simply push a button to send the order direct to a car plant, and the vehicle will be built exactly as specified.

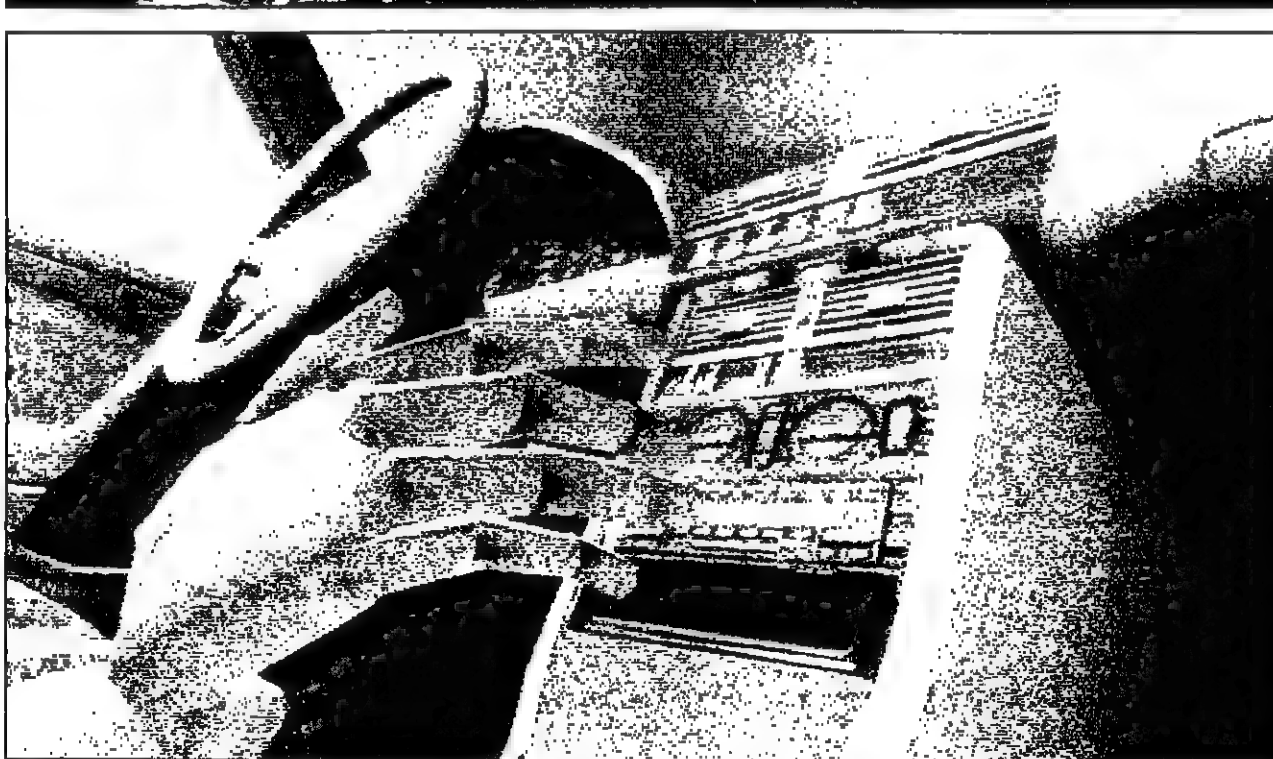
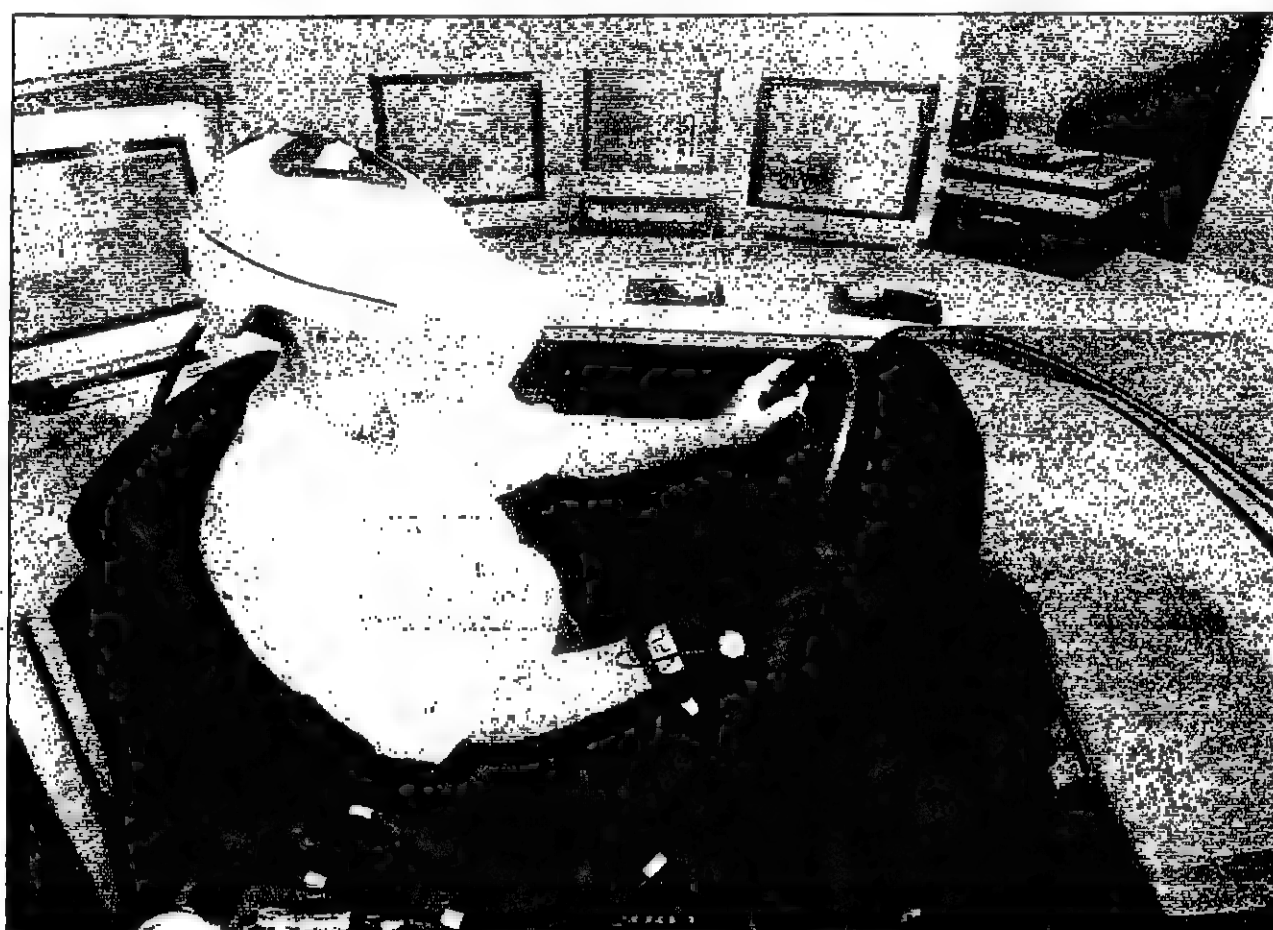
Instead of flicking through baffling glossy brochures and trying to construct a mental picture of the car you'd like to buy, it will convincingly materialise around you. When I tried the system I was able, with a burst of a hand-held laser gun, to move dials and controls, and change interior decor — materials and colours — to tailor the car to my needs.

The advance should end the frustration of facing a salesman who has in stock only a gleaming pearlescent white two-door cabriolet version of the model you want, when you want the same car as a metallic blue five-door hatchback.

This is no dream. In America, such virtual reality hardware is already being used to design cars, saving manufacturers hundreds of thousands of dollars in the process. The showroom version is the next step and is being developed now. Dealers in America are clamouring for showroom versions and it is only a matter of time before the technology arrives here.

The first steps have already been taken by Volvo and Rover, who have introduced advanced CD-Rom computers into their dealerships, allowing customers to create the car they want — with all varieties of specification and colour — on a computer screen.

Mercedes-Benz researchers in Stuttgart are also using virtual reality to improve interior ergonomics. Researchers wear a computer-linked helmet and glove, and sit in a car seat with just a steering wheel in front of them. The endless variety of interior designs and dashboard layouts are projected within the helmet for the researcher to view. The data glove allows him or her to



empty rooms containing just a driving seat and steering wheel. Fitted with computer-linked goggles, and sitting in the virtual reality room, the customer sees the non-existent "car" materialising convincingly around him or her. Randall Smith, another GM research scientist, says: "We have used this to help design some aspects of our 1997/8 model cars. I would expect to see it coming through to dealers within five years."

Having tried the system, I can vouch that the "invisible car" is extremely convincing. Around the "car" in the darkened virtual reality room are a ceiling and, to the front and at the sides, three walls of projector screens, which capture the images from the battery of computer-controlled projectors placed behind them. The customer sits in the driving seat wearing a pair of computer-linked wrap-around goggles. The interior of the non-existent car is then projected on to the screens, creating what appears to be a perfect interior all around.

The illusion is so convincing that despite knowing it was all

LEFT: Mercedes researchers using virtual reality equipment. The computer-linked helmet and glove allow them to change designs and dashboard layouts in seconds, not weeks

done with mirrors. I found myself reaching to pat the front passenger seat, only for my hand to pass through air, reaching forward to change gear with a lever that wasn't there; and trying to adjust heating and ventilation controls that were a chimera.

As I moved my head, so the computer compensated and adjusted the projected images to maintain the three-dimensional illusion. A burst with my hand-held laser gun allowed me to change instantly the colours of the interior and I could also alter the outside conditions, from a sunny day to overcast, to see how those colours varied.

Another laser burst let me move dials and controls around the fascia to where they suited me best.

For motorists who have already discovered fantasy football, fantasy cricket and computer games, the mix of fantasy dealer and virtual car might mean the best is still to come.

THE AA'S GRIDLOCK GUIDE

● LONDON
Regent Street closed southbound from Glasshouse Street for resurfacing from 8am to 6pm Monday, diversions via Conduit Street.
A406 North Circular Road, Upper Edmonton: width reduced on Lea Valley Viaduct until end of 1995.
A219 Putney Bridge: one lane each way until June.
A316 Twickenham Bridge, near Richmond: one lane each way until end of March.
A501 Kings Cross one-way system: lane closures, 24-hour restrictions; long delays.
A1 East Finchley: lane restrictions on Falden Way and Lyttelton Road; regular delays.
A3 Kingston Bypass: southbound single lane between Shannon's Corner and the New Malden exit slip, until Feb 27; severe delays.
● SOUTH-EAST
M25 Surrey J7-8 (M23/Reigate): contraflow causes regular delays.
M25 Surrey J10-11 (A3/Chertsey): widening with contraflow.
A3 Guildford, Surrey: contraflow between Abbotwood and Cathedral interchange, until end of May.
A329 Bracknell, Berkshire: works at Met Office roundabout until June.
A27 Chichester Bypass, Sussex: contraflow between Westhampnett and Whyke roundabouts until May.
● SOUTH-WEST
M4 Avon J20-21 (Almondsbury/Aust): works affecting both carriageways until May 1995.
M32 Avon J1-2 (Filton/Exeter): lane restrictions both ways; peak-time delays.
M5 Gloucestershire J11-12 (Cheltenham/Gloucester): contraflow until September.
M6 Devon near J27 (Tiverton): contraflow and northbound entry slip closed until end of February.
A419 Swindon, Wiltshire: contraflow between Turnpike roundabout and A581 Junction, with slip road onto B4141 Hyde Rd closed; until end of March.
A348 Dorset: works at Longham, temporary lights; long delays likely.
● MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA
M6 West Midlands J4a-5 (near Birmingham): contraflow until March.
M5 West Midlands J3-4 (south-west of Birmingham): lane closures until end of month.
A800 Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire: closed between Hanford and City Road interchange from 7pm today to 6am Monday; diversions.
A1(M) near Blyth, Nottinghamshire: contraflow between Harworth and A614 until March.
● NORTH
M6 Cheshire J20-21A (Lymm/Croft): works near Thelwall viaduct until May. Southbound entry slip closed at J21.
M62 West Yorkshire J25-26 (Brighouse/Chain Bar): contraflow and 50mph restriction; westbound entry slip closed at J25; until March 24.
M18 South Yorkshire J3-4 (Doncaster Area): contraflow and lane restrictions. Northbound entry slip closed at J3, until April.
M62 Humber J34-35 (Whitby Bridge/Langham): contraflow and eastbound entry slip at J34 closed until end of May.
A1M County Durham: between Bowburn and Carville, contraflow two lanes each way and 50mph limit until April.
● WALES
Cardiff: Wales play England at Cardiff Arms Park today; closures 11am-6pm at Westgate Street between Park Street and Castle Street junctions. Womansby Street, Quay Street, Guildhall Place, Scott Road and part of King Edward VII Avenue.
M4 Gwent J23-22 (Magor/Newhouse): lane restrictions and contraflow between Magor and Rogiet until June.
A5 Maerdy, Clwyd: temporary lights and short-term closures until end of July.
A465 West Glamorgan, between Llanidarcy and Aberdulais: contraflow on Saltings viaduct until June; long delays.
● SCOTLAND
M90 Tayside J8-9 (Ardy/Mulmington): contraflow.
M8 Lothian J1 (Newbridge): restrictions between J1 and Edinburgh City Bypass.
Edinburgh: width restrictions on High Street between North and South bridges until end of June.
Glasgow: Paisley Road West, one lane each way between Portman Street and West Street, and on M8 eastbound exit slip.
A741 Renfrew Road, Paisley, Strathclyde: closed northbound, contraflow Southbound.
● NORTHERN IRELAND
A6 Co Londonderry: temporary lights on Glenties Road, Cashel, until March.
A26 Co Londonderry: temporary lights on Greenhill Road at junction with Ballymore Bypass until September.
A37 Limavady, Co Londonderry: temporary lights on Broad Road until April.
Downpatrick, Co Down: Market St one-way between Patrick's Avenue and Irish St.

Continued from page 1

time they arrived, flames could be seen with a great deal of smoke. The fire was extinguished but the brigade had to smash the windscreen and remove it to get to the area below the front parcel shelf to damp it down.

"There was extensive fire damage to the front end and the engine compartment was a mess of melted fibreglass and insulation. The majority of the damage was on the nearside close to the battery," Mr Lovell said the vehicle had been regularly serviced in accordance with Renault's recommendations and had given no problems before the fire.

The Lovells' insurers, Equi-

ty Red Star, decided the Espace was too fire-damaged to be repaired and it was collected from Peterborough by Warley Auto Salvage of Brentwood, Essex.

It was not the first that Fred Ellwood, the salvage company boss, had seen. "I have had two others with identical fire damage come in within the last few weeks. I am particularly interested because my daughter, who has three young children, owns one. The fire had all started in the engine compartment, close to the battery."

His information was passed to Croson who, now aware of four fires, contacted Renault again. "I was trying to gain

'The engine compartment was a mess of melted fibreglass'

some acknowledgement that there may be a safety problem and lives could be at risk," he said. "The company refused to acknowledge there was a problem but I could not accept that so many vehicles could catch fire without a link."

Mr Croson also alerted the Leicester office of Norwich Union, his insurance company, which began inquiries.

When staff contacted head office, they discovered engineers were already investigating. "We are aware that there has been more than one fire of this type. We are investigating, together with forensic experts," a company spokesman said.

Norwich Union had been tipped off at a meeting of the insurance company engineers'

technical committee, held at the Motor Insurance Repair Research Centre at Thatcham, Berkshire. Ken Roberts, director of research, said: "It was raised at a regular meeting of chief engineers to discuss technical developments, unusual problems and administrative matters concerning the Department of Transport. We heard stories that something in the front compartment was working loose and chafing against wiring."

The fires were, in fact, being caused by the closeness of the fuel filter outlet to electrical wiring. Diesel fuel needs pre-heating on cold days by an electrical coil before it enters the cylinders, to prevent it

thickening and becoming less combustible and to ensure the car starts immediately. In a few cases, the outlet was overheating wiring harnesses and causing a short circuit.

Renault said yesterday: "The modification, which will take a matter of minutes, involves installing a fuse in the engine's diesel pre-heating system and fitting a plastic retaining clip."

The company said the fuse had been fitted "as a precautionary measure" to new Espace turbo diesels since last June. It could not explain why earlier models were not recalled then or why Mr Croson's concerns were not tackled more promptly.

MPs oppose fuel rise

MPs would refuse to back huge increases in petrol prices to combat pollution, according to a survey by the AA. The organisation asked 100 MPs what they thought about proposals from the Royal Commission on the Environment to double the cost of fuel and discovered 70 opposed the plan. Eighty-two per cent want a reduction in journeys by car but 73 per cent said that jacking up petrol prices would be "a vote-loser".

Euro car sales up

Even if the recovery is running out of steam here, sales of new cars are reviving across Europe. Figures from the European Association of Car Manufacturers show sales ahead 3.6 per cent in the European Union with France, Denmark, Greece, Italy and Sweden showing the biggest gains. Sales of Rovers were up three per cent, Jaguars by 0.2 per cent while Volkswagen remains the number one carmaker in Europe.

Daewoo's UK debut

The first cars from Daewoo, the South Korean manufacturer which is little known here, have arrived in Britain. The shipment of 4,500 cars was unloaded this week at Portbury dock in Bristol, with 1,200 due to be sold in British showrooms. Daewoo is promising two models, the Nexia and Espero, which will be sold through exclusive Daewoo out-of-town shopping malls later this year.

Latin sales bonanza

Two of Ford's most popular European vehicles could win sales worth \$700 million (£466 million) in annual exports to South America. The company has shipped 2,000 Mondeos, made in Belgium, to Brazil, Argentina and Chile, while 3,800 Fiestas have been shipped from Ford's plant in Valencia, Spain, to Brazil.

A tale of two learners — one apparently destined to fail, the other who just keeps on enjoying success

Here endeth the lessons

Kevin Eason meets a priest whose salvation lay in an automatic

The Rev David Guest shrank from the object as though it had been sent by the very devil himself. His body tensed as he confessed: "Oh no, I'm sorry, I just can't do it. It would be too much for me."

Yet the object of his dread moved quite smoothly from second to third and up to fourth; a simple manual gear-shift could surely hold no terrors so great that a man would refuse even a single attempt to manipulate it?

But then most drivers have not suffered the same traumas as Mr Guest. You see, that gear shift — a no-nonsense H-gate, five-speed box fitted to millions of cars — was the obstacle between him and a driving licence for 17 years.

Through nearly 600 lessons, he pushed and pulled and still never fathomed what he was supposed to do with it. Call it lack of co-ordination or mechanical dyslexia; whatever it was, even the power of prayer was not enough to prevent the pain of those lessons, the equivalent of 25 days spent at the wheels of Fiestas, Metros and Datsuns with as much hope of passing a driving test as a camel has of getting through the eye of a biblical needle.

"I realised that the reason I was not getting any better was the fact that I could not co-ordinate in any way the clutch and gearbox," he confessed at his home, round the corner from his church, Holy Trinity in Chester. "I spent years unable to figure out why I should need a gearstick, never mind knowing when I was supposed to change."

"When I changed, I realised I was looking at my feet instead of the road and that led

to some awful experiences." So awful, in fact, that some instructors shook hands after the first lesson, waved goodbye to Mr Guest, and never returned. One lesson in Hampshire ended abruptly when Mr Guest was confronted by a combine harvester on a rural road. But an emergency manoeuvre to prevent both pupil and instructor being minced and baled required an intimate knowledge of all three pedals, knowledge that was clearly beyond Mr Guest. The result was an unplanned journey through a hedge into a field of cows.

'When I changed, I looked at my feet, not at the road'

"It was always like that," he said. "I would be stranded on cross-roads looking down at the gearstick and wondering what to do. I became very good at toppling cyclists off their bikes, and once I almost knocked down a lollipop lady. She shouted quite loudly at me from the bonnet of the car."

So our curate was condemned to a lifetime on foot, his bulky 6ft 4in frame a familiar sight in the Blacon district of Chester, plodding from house to house to visit his flock. He had spent about £5,000 on lessons to no avail, not even daring to apply for a test, knowing his size 11 feet would always stand between him and pressing the clutch pedal at the right moment.

He had almost decided to give up, until he took the motorway equivalent of the road to Damascus, the street to the British School of Motoring in Chester. Their vision was practically blinding in its simplicity: abandon the gearstick and drive an automatic.

He jumped into a BSM Vauxhall Corsa with automatic shift and, admittedly 40 lessons later, he passed.

But the new-found confidence of being a fully-fledged driver was still not enough to tempt him into one more confrontation with the gearstick for the benefit of *The Times*. We wanted him to demonstrate what problems he had, so that we could offer him further his driving career.

even perhaps release him from the tyranny of automatics to the joy and freedom of the stick shift. We even took him the latest Rover 100 — the sort of car he spent hours in over the years — to try out.

But it was not to be. He was happy to spoon his frame into the passenger seat, but all attempts to get him to drive failed.

"I am too big for these small cars anyway," he said. "I think that was part of the problem in the past — my knees were always jammed up against the steering wheel and I couldn't move around properly."

"I'm not bothered about driving a manual gearbox car. I can enjoy the freedom now of travelling wherever I like. My family is down in Brighton, and that used to take five or six hours by train changing in

London or at Crewe. Now I can drive down there. I will be able to get around the parish easily and down to the theatre, which I love, in Stratford-upon-Avon. Passing my test will change my life."

So, after 17 years, 632 heart-breaking hours of effort and the shattered nerves of a dozen instructors, the waiting is over for Mr Guest. Truly, here endeth the lessons.



The Rev David Guest spent 17 years and £5,000 on lessons — some instructors never returned after the first lesson

The driver who loves taking tests

From a road roller to a Chieftain tank, you name it, he can drive it

Clive Greenaway just loves taking driving tests. He has taken and passed, at least one a year for the past 20 years and now he is claiming a record as the first person in Britain to qualify to drive every category of vehicle on a driving licence.

His obsession with examinations culminated when he passed the test to drive a road roller. He is now qualified to drive: a car, a motorcycle, a three-wheeler, a van, a lorry, a bus, a lawn mower, an amphibious vehicle, a vehicle adapted for the disabled, an articulated lorry, military vehicles including a ferret scout car and a Chieftain tank and, of course, a road roller.

In fact, to feed his obsession he joined the Army a year after passing his car test at the age of 17. That way he could get to grips with heavy goods vehicles before he reached the required civilian age of 21. And when he left three years later he became — what else? — a driving instructor, Britain's youngest at the time.

Mr Greenaway, now 37, runs the interestingly-named Impact driving centre in Poole, Dorset, but boasts of not having had an accident in his 20 years on the road. "I haven't think how much it has cost over the years, but taking a test always serves as a reminder of how my pupils

feel before their tests," he says. In addition to his impressive list of licences, Mr Greenaway has taken the Institute of Advanced Motorists' test, the Police League of Safe Drivers, the National Drivers' Association (gold level), the DoT approved instructor (grade 6), Diploma in Driving Instruction, the special "Cardington A" test for driving examiners, skid control tests, high performance tests and four-wheel drive tests.

He says he first became fascinated with vehicles because he was brought up in a family without a car. He learnt to drive a dumper truck on a building site even before he took his first test, and has never looked back.

But he has a confession. "Yes — I did fail one test, but I don't like to talk about it. It's depressing."

Nor has his driving been without incident: "I was out teaching a rather slow old lady one day on what we call a nursery road when a bunch of lads in a Corina came past in the opposite direction. They stopped just down the road and then put it in reverse to overtake us. That's where all my tests came in handy. Whatever happens, the instructor must stay calm."

ALAN COPPS



Clive Greenaway: claims a record

Up the Amazon without a winch

Ten mud-spattered hopefuls vie for a place on Britain's Camel Trophy team



A Camel trophy competitor demonstrates the sort of trouble a chap can get into

IT IS probably one of the greatest off-road adventures in the world, yet only the keenest of the UK's off-road buffs will be familiar with the 15-year-old Camel Trophy competition. That is particularly surprising in Britain, not only because the organisers reckon that Land Rovers are the only vehicles up to the job, but also because the UK has such a good team record in the competition.

This year, in May, the adventure will take the participants on the Mundo Maya (World of the Mayas) '95 trek, passing through Belize, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras in turbo-diesel engined Land Rover Discoveries. The organisers of the Trophy say that the competition "provides amateur enthusiasts with a once in a lifetime opportunity to combine the art of survival with one of the most gruelling four-wheel-drive expeditions in the world".

For once the hype is true. Bob Ives and his brother Joe, full-time farmers from Hampshire, made up Britain's winning team in the Amazon in 1989 — "a quite incredible three weeks", Bob says.

The Camel bug obviously bites hard, as the Ives brothers have kept in close contact with the Trophy since their win. Bob has been a marshall on every event since, accompany-

ing the competitors to the four corners of the globe. Joe has been the manager of the UK team since 1991, and spent months preparing for the second selection weekend this month. Held in the grounds of Eastnor Castle near Ross on Wye, a long-time Land Rover proving ground, the three-day event welcomed teams from the UK, Belgium and Scandinavia.

Ten hopefuls from each country (20 from Scandinavia) spent midday on Friday until midday on Sunday undergoing various tasks in the quagmire of Eastnor's

grounds. These ranged from the all-important driving to an assault course, bridge building and orienteering. Interestingly, as much time was given to a "winching" test as to actual off-road driving. Organisers assessed teams of five (usually a mix of all the nationalities, to put a premium on communication skills) on their ability to winch out a Discovery jammed in an impossibly mud-bound position, a highly likely occurrence on the Mundo Maya trip.

When I caught up with the ten dirt-spattered UK hopefuls on Saturday evening at their

evening meal, they had the collective appearance of an exhausted but happy mountain rescue team. Just four would go on to the final selection stage in Istanbul.

Tim Whittle, a 34-year-old engineer from Somerset, had always seen the Camel trophy as a goal. "I never thought it was realistic — I'd applied before and got no reply — but this year the letter came."

Tim's luck was in. By the following afternoon he had been selected.

While the teams were enjoying a well-earned meal, Bob Ives showed me around the



Camel Trophy specification Discoveries, ready for their fifth year on the event. The basic five-door TDi is modified, albeit minimally. The cabin gains a roll cage, which is also used as an anchor for the massive, spotlight-clad roof rack. Underneath there is an extra steering guard, and the nose houses a bull bar and 8,000lb electric winch, powered by twin batteries.

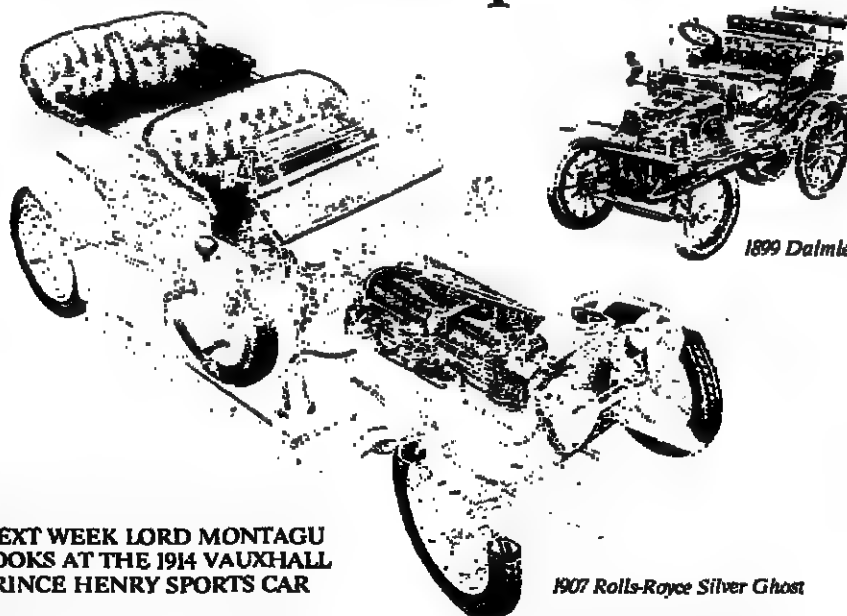
ASIDE from the engine's air intake being raised to roof level, to allow rivers to be forded, that's about the sum of the changes.

By Sunday, the selectors had chosen the UK team. Aside from Tim Whittle, Michael Oxley, 27, a commodities broker from Leigh-on-Sea, and his flatmate Rob Connor, 28, an automotive engineer, had made it. A 34-year-old Cardiff-based agricultural technician, Trefor Coles, made up the four.

Let's hope this year the British team gets the coverage it deserves, and that Land Rover starts to shout rather more loudly about its remarkable Camel Trophy heritage.

HILTON HOLLOWAY

THE TIMES Historic cars print offer



NEXT WEEK LORD MONTAGU LOOKS AT THE 1914 VAUXHALL PRINCE HENRY SPORTS CAR

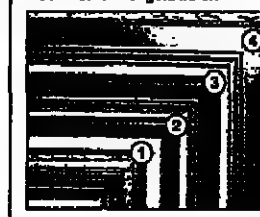
Today we offer readers the opportunity to buy prints of John Lawson's cut-away illustrations of Lord Montagu's series of outstanding British vehicles.

The first two prints in the series of 12 are the 1899 Daimler and the 1907 Silver Ghost (pictured above) which have been featured over the past few weeks.

The prints are available in two forms:

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3. Black lined wood with two gold lines.
4. An unusual contemporary dark wood frame with gold inner.



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- A limited edition of 250 prints signed by Lawson and Lord Montagu, on 170gm paper, 297mm by 420mm plus a 6cm border and in a choice of four frames. Price £29.99 including VAT and carriage. For queries, phone 0843-602717.

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Please send me _____ (quantity) unframed Silver Ghost prints @ £3.99 each
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	Qty	Price	Qty	Price	Qty	Price	Qty	Price	Price
Daimler	0	£29.99							
Silver Ghost	0	£29.99							

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ceased was priced new at £160,000."

Pentari Mondial 3.2 for £24,000, an array of Porsche 911s from £8,000 to £9,000 and a small fleet of the beautifully-shaped Jaguar Mark II crans from £6,500.

Mr Cricman says: "We have a 1975 Rolls-Royce Corniche Convertible with 58,000 miles that has been fully prepared and overhauled for £38,500—a car that is identical to the model Rolls-Royce has only just stopped selling and which when production

The golden rule is to purchase the best possible example of the marque you can afford, and have the car checked out by an expert. Buy if possible from a reputable dealer, and look for a car with a full service history which is supported by a warranty. Then — enjoy.

ROVER MONTEGO

Early Montego models earned Rover the sort of reputation it has since successfully lived down: unreliable, noisy, windy, and plagued with nagging faults. More recent models, especially the versatile and roomy estate, offer reliable motoring. Thanks to the unfashionable image though, and the hard-to-shake reputation, used versions can be had cheaply and, if backed with a bundle of service bills, offer value-for-money motoring.

Overall height 55.5

Ground clearance 6.0

Wheelbase 101

Load height 25.5

Boot capacity 18 cu ft

Rear cabin width 53.5

36 42.5 27 38

ALL measurements are in inches

ROVER MONTEGO

Overall height 55.9

Wheelbase 101

Ground clearance 6.0

Rear cabin width 53.5

Boot capacity 18 cu ft

Load height 25.5

Interior dimensions: 39, 27, 38, 55, 42.5, 55

All measurements in inches

REPLACEMENT PARTS: (Prices include VAT); clutch assembly £180; full exhaust system £170; rear shock absorber £46; front brake pads £55; alternator £20; rear motor (exchange) £95; tyre, £60.

MODEL Jan/Feb	PRICE		
	Feb95	Jan95	Chg.
Rover Mini 1300 Sprite	4725	4725	0.0
Citroen AX 1.0 Dabur 3dr	4960	4875	1.0
Daihatsu Mira 5dr	5175	5085	1.5
PSO Caro 1.5 GLX 5dr	4650	4575	1.5
Fiat Cinquecento 3dr	4525	4525	0.0
Fiat Panda 1.0 CLX 3dr	4375	4295	1.8
Fiat Uno 1.0ie Start 3dr	4995	4975	0.4
Ford Fiesta 1.1i 3dr	5795	5850	-0.9
Hyundai X2 1.3LS 5dr	5395	5275	0.9
Lada Niva 1500 E 4dr	3225	3095	4.0
Lada Clio 1.9 GL 5dr	4575	3935	3.9
Nissan Micra 1.0i 3dr	5795	5785	0.0
Peugeot 106 1.1XN Graduate 3dr	4875	4720	1.5
Peugeot 205 1.1i Junior 3dr	5195	5095	1.6
Proton 1.3 GE 4dr	5295	5375	-1.5
Proton 1.3 GL Aeroback 3dr	6250	6325	-1.2
Renault 5 Campus Prima 3dr	4750	4750	0.0
Renault Clio RL 1.2 Prima 3dr	6095	6035	0.0
Renault Clio 1.9 RL Prima Diesel 3dr	6455	6375	1.8
Rover Metro 1.1i Quet 3dr	4875	4720	1.5
Rover Metro 1.1 C 5dr	5375	5425	-0.9
Rover Metro 1.1 S 5dr	6295	6395	-1.6
Rover Metro 1.4 LD 5dr	6395	6395	0.0
Seat Ibiza 1.3 CL 3dr	5925	5825	1.7
Skoda Favorit GLX 5dr	5295	5195	1.8
Suzuki Swift GLi Estate	5695	5595	1.7
Subaru Vivio GLi 4WD 5dr	5125	5100	-0.5
Suzuki Swift 1.3 GS 3dr	6095	6075	0.2
Vauxhall Corsa 1.2i Merit 3dr	5925	5825	1.7
Vauxhall Corsa Merit Diesel 5dr	6595	6575	0.3
Vauxhall Polo 1.0i Genesis coupe 3dr	6825	6695	1.9
Vauxhall Polo 1.3 CL coupe 3dr	6695	6575	1.8
Rover Mini 1.3i Cooper	5925	5895	0.5
Citroen ZX 1.4 Reflex 5dr	6650	6625	0.4
Dacia Duster GLX Estate	4750	4795	-0.9
Daihatsu Charade 1.3i GS 3dr	5175	5095	0.3
Fiat Punto 55 S 5dr	5175	5095	0.3
Fiat Tipo 1.4ie S 3dr	6150	6150	0.0
Fiat Tempra 1.6ie S 4dr	6650	6725	-1.1
Ford Fiesta 1.1i LX 5dr	6895	6850	-0.6
Ford Escort 1.3 5dr	8875	8950	-1.1
Kia Pride 1.3 LX 5dr	5175	5175	0.0
Nissan Micra 1.3 LX 3dr	6725	6795	-0.4
Seat Toledo 1.8i CL 5dr	6675	6575	1.5
Seat Ibiza 1.8i 5dr	6575	6595	0.2
Rover Maestro 1.3i Clubman 5dr	5990	5875	1.3
Citroen AX 1.1i Forte	5595	5495	1.8
Seat Marbella 900i Fun 3dr	3950	3995	-1.4
Ford Fiesta 1.8i L Diesel 3dr	6650	6625	0.4
Ford Fiesta 1.3i Auto 3dr	6435	6495	-1.0

But analysts are finding there are not enough reasons for the vehicle's success, such as the Toyota Previa, which can seat up to seven. The position is likely to worsen with a series of new models soon to come to Britain from Peugeot, Fiat, Citroën, Chrysler and Ford.

Andrew Wilkinson, editorial director at CAP Motor Research, says that MPVs are "not going to be so much, though those selling now must not be going to be so happy," he says.

With a diesel, a hard-core hitting sales price guard is now in place. "The cars that have attracted premium prices are now having trouble finding buyers."

There is also little demand for high-spec diesels when buyers clearly want fuel economy and not luxury. "Price is struggling," said Mr.

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A black and white photograph of a woman standing next to a small boat on a trailer. The boat has "1986/ 10-0562" and "1000" written on its side.

THE TIMES ROAD TEST: Rover 100. Still the friendly old Metro, says Kevin Eason, motoring correspondent

Granny gets a good makeover

Putting the veteran Rover Metro through its third big facelift seems a bit like sending your granny to get her hair perm and a makeover in the hope of her making the finals of Miss World.

There are all the gorgeous young things in their new frocks parading around and there, at the end of the line, is Granny topped with a blue rinse and sheer stockings barely able to contain the varicose veins, and now calling herself the lovely Rosita.

Even a dimwit might spot the fact that Granny had been around a bit, new name or not. So it is no good Rover putting a new 100 badge on the boot of what is clearly the Metro, hoping that nobody will spot that the car has been around for 15 years, longer than most of its competitors in Europe.

But, with respect to grannies everywhere, many a good tune is played on an old fiddle. And if Grannies could get a makeover as convincing as the Metro's, they might just be in with a chance of wobbling the crown atop their perm.

The Metro, sorry Rover 100, might be positively venerable, but it has the freshness many a younger rival might envy. The new look is obvious because Rover has thrown out that rather bland, square-looking nose for the more rounded front with a mini-version of the Rover corporate grille. The rear is more noticeably Metro, although the big, moulded bumper gives the car an interesting chunky look.

Inside, the 100 is neat and comfy, but rear legroom could

be a trial for anyone with ambitions to be more than a circus midjet. The dashboard is clear as Rover has cleverly kept set the three spokes of the steering wheel low to allow maximum observation of the dials.

Rover is also one of the best around at using interior materials — the padded steering wheel is a pleasant tactile experience and the door and seat covers are bright and highly attractive.

But the revelation of a model, that effectively started its life within months of Margaret Thatcher becoming Prime Minister, is just how good it is to drive. Most small cars feel every bump in the road because they do not have enough length in the wheelbase to soften the ride: as soon as a front wheel hits a divot, there is a rear wheel coming on behind to give driver and passengers a double jolt. The 100's front suspension tells the rear sus-

On the longest trip, the engine runs along happily

pension what is happening to try to keep the car level. It sounds complicated — and it is — but the result is that a ride in the 100 is not the bone-jarring journey it could be.

Turning into corners is a matter of hit and hope in some small cars, but the 100 is confident and 'sure-footed', barely disturbed by uneven road surfaces as it moves through bends.

I tried the 1.4-litre SLi version for a feel of the new Metro 100, and left the car more than pleasantly surprised. Rover's K-series engine, which can be transformed from one-litre spritz to 3.5-litre executive cruise power, has always been



The Rover 114 SLi uses the K-series, four-cylinder engine for a top speed of 103mph and 35.3mpg urban fuel consumption. The standard £8,195 model, which is classed

as insurance group 5, includes side-impact bars, alarm, immobiliser and central locking, removable sunroof and "lights on" buzzer. Driver's airbag is a £265 option.

a winner — so much so that Ford tried to buy it during the 1980s. In the 100 body, the engine is brisk, quiet and sweet through an easy-to-use five-speed manual gearbox.

The 1.4-litre is wonderfully punchy, making it easy to forget you are driving such a small car. On the longest motorway trip, the engine romps away quite happily, untroubled by distance or speed and I reached destinations without any evidence of fatigue caused by boom, which, with many small models, can wear the driver thin at the eardrums.

Acceleration is as swift as necessary — a driver with the heaviest right foot should be able to manage 30mpg quite easily — and that means spending only about £15 to fill the 7.8-gallon tank and power the 100 for more than 200 miles.

Yet there are still moments that tell you this is an old car brilliantly dressed up as something new. Filling the petrol tank, for example, requires a watchful eye and Fred Astaire

footwork. Instead of the petrol nozzle shutting off, the first sign the tank is full is the surge of petrol that splashes over the shoes of the unwary.

The fuel filler cap is also situated rather obviously in the middle of the car's offside with no cover or integral locking mechanism, a little at odds with the smooth bodywork and the clever alarm-immobiliser system, operated by remote control attached to the ignition key, which governs the rest of the car.

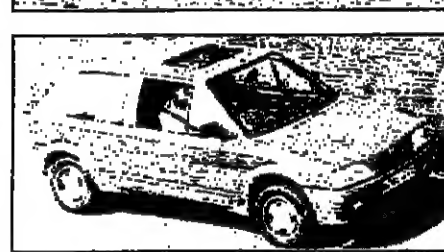
The driving position is also somewhat sit-up-and-beg, the steering wheel raked away from the driver, making turning an agricultural heave and push, even in such a small car.

Despite that, the Rover 100 is a terrific little car, particularly for urban drivers who could probably expect as much as 40mpg. Rover's comprehensive finance package plus cheap servicing and easy-to-reach dealers should help to push the 100's ratings up again. The 100 goes to show that Granny could still go out on the catwalk and look as good as the strutting younger models.

THE ROVER AND ITS RIVALS



The millionth Metro rolls off the assembly line at Longbridge



PEUGEOT 106 1.40XR
If the 106 is not the best in class, it must be near the top as a driver's car. Great performance: top speed 108mph, 0 to 60mph time of 11.4 seconds, plus urban fuel consumption of 35.3mpg. Price £8,595, insurance group 6.

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4i
Looks fine but is a bit lumpy and uninteresting to drive. Still a good package for the town driver. Top speed 98mph, 0 to 60mph time of 14 seconds. Urban fuel consumption only 32.8mpg. Price £8,885, insurance group 4.

CITROEN AX 1.4i
Cleverly designed and fun to drive, the AX has a top speed of 98mph. Its 0 to 60mph time of 10.9 seconds means it is not the zippiest, but urban fuel consumption is 35.3mpg. Price £8,860, insurance group 6.

'When the cars start to get older, they throw up problems that even the manufacturer does not understand. We have to spend hours to isolate the source.'

A modern motorist and his money are easily parted

Nobody would dispute that cars have improved in leaps and bounds over the past decade. For the most part they are faster, smoother, cleaner, better to drive and more reliable. After experiencing the advantages of, say, power steering or fuel injection, few would want to go back to bicep-bulging steering or the will-it, won't-it churning that typified many carburettor engines. There is, however, a price to pay — and many owners of older cars are beginning to count the cost of high-tech motoring.

Although up-market cars have used computer-controlled engine management systems for some time, the 1980s brought a flood of complex electronic-based features such as ABS braking, central locking, electric windows and automatic gearboxes to even the most down-to-earth hatchbacks. A sudden shift towards safety and environmental concerns at the end of the decade also added catalytic converters (made from expensive rare-earth metals) and airbags to increasingly sophisticated specifications.

All this user-friendly technology is fine in a new car, especially one that's company-owned, with the warranty shielding the driver from expensive trouble. A few years down the line, though, the private motorist is finding that vital components are failing, rendering the car potentially useless, and that main dealer parts prices are unacceptably high.

The anecdotal evidence is pretty conclusive. One Peugeot mechanic told me of a customer whose four-year-old 605

There is a price to pay for the hi-tech advances of recent years, reports Hilton Holloway

limo needed a complete replacement exhaust. The twin catalyst system cost more than £2,200, nearly 30 per cent of the value of the car. Apparently, the 605 driver was seriously considering scrapping the car, as without the new system the car wouldn't pass a MOT emissions test. Even the owners of Escorts, Fiestas and Metros will soon be facing big bills when the catalysed exhausts of their cars become due for replacement.

Other killer financial punches are common to nearly every high-spec car built since the mid-1980s. Engine and ABS brake management computers tend to be sealed and failure means new units are the only fix. A specialist in second-hand Jaguar parts says the numerous computers in the XJ40 series cars can prove extremely troublesome. "A new engine black box can cost £700, and we get a big demand for them, but the supply is limited."

One owner of a Renault 19 16v had his ABS unit replaced under warranty when the car was only eight months old. Thirteen months later it failed again, and because the ABS unit was out of warranty, he was presented with a bill for

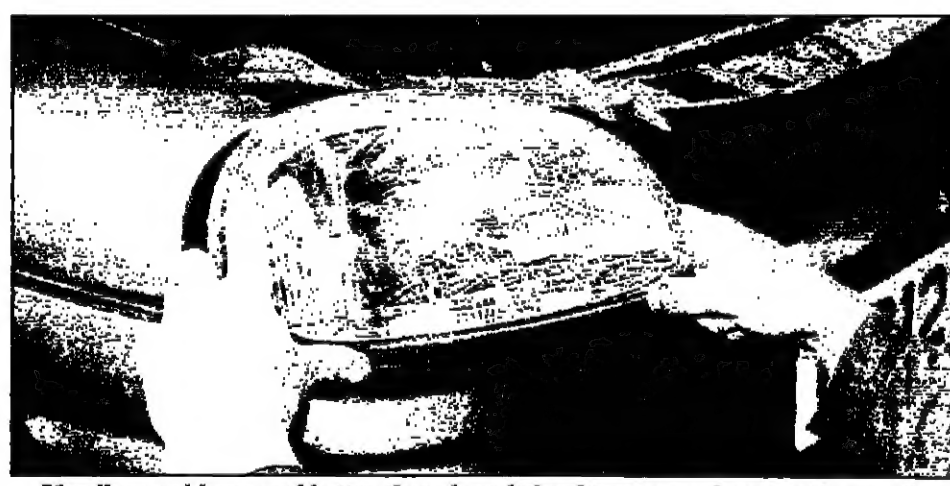
£1,350. Renault UK offered to pay half — it was only after the attentions of a national motoring magazine that it stumped up the full price.

BMW takes a dim view of older cars that have not been maintained in the dealer network. "We take a very strong goodwill policy towards expensive failures on three- to four-year-old cars with a full BMW history," said the company. "However, if a certain part is proving problematic, we will drop the price."

The printed-circuit boards for older 3-series instrument panels are prone to failure, so we dropped the price from £135 to £40 on exchange. We have also started the Auto Tecnic centre in Croydon, operating at a reduced labour rate for owners of older BMWs.

For many owners, independent experts are the only way to run a complex car relatively economically, having been driven away from main dealers by absurd parts' prices and labour rates. According to one independent Alfa Romeo specialist, it is the complexity of modern cars that proves a major hurdle to keeping them running smoothly. "When the cars start to get older, they throw up problems that even the manufacturer does not understand. We have to spend hours trying to isolate the source."

Some one-marque workshops have invested heavily in diagnostic equipment to keep older cars on the road, including one Saab servicing expert who has invested tens of thousands of pounds in diagnostic machines. He still finds,



Headlamps: bigger and better, though sealed units mean replacement is a costly business. A new headlamp for a Vauxhall Senator costs £260, plus fitting



Dashboards complex electronics mean big labour bills. A printed-circuit board for a BMW 535i costs about £500, and they are prone to failure

though, that his company has to run to keep up. "Manufacturers don't help because cars are continuously being modified under the skin. Wiring systems can completely change from one year to the next. We have to buy a new set of workshop manuals every year. Even something simple like a hazard warning light switch has become a sealed, and no doubt expensive, electronic box."

Many specialists source their own parts to cut costs. One Essex-based Audi breaker can offer genuine rear brake callipers for just £99 each, a

big saving on the official Audi price of above £300. Audi's response is not entirely convincing. "In 1994 we reduced the cost of 744 major service items, such as clutches, exhausts and panels, by an average of 22 per cent. We recognise that grey imports are coming in, but installing them with non-franchised labour destroys the parts warranty," said the company. Any failure associated with the replacement part would also be outside the warranty.

Despite the rather weak protestations of the big car-makers, little is being done to

make the ownership of one of the millions of highly specified company cars sold every year into a viable long-term private bet. Were it not for the small one-marque experts, many cars would have already become economically unfeasible.

As cars become more complex, the situation is likely to worsen, unless manufacturers slash the cost of spares. After all, much is made of the recyclability of modern cars — but just how environmentally friendly is it to send a five-year-old executive car to the scrapyard for the sake of an extortionately-priced exhaust?

TEN TENDER SPOTS

1. **Exhaust systems:** In general, the more expensive the car and the larger the engine, the more costly it will be. Most cars made after 1989 will have catalyst-equipped exhausts which are vastly more expensive to replace.

2. **Peugeot 605 3.0 V6,** with twin-catalyst system. A design fault can often mean total replacement is needed early in the car's life. Cost at a Peugeot dealership: £2,200-plus, fitted.

3. **ABS systems:** Sought-after safety option but a few years down the line problems could cause a major impact on the wallet. The components (brain, master cylinder, pump and wheel sensors) are all prone to failure. An ABS function failure, even if the brakes still work, means an MOT failure.

4. **Saab 9000 ABS master cylinder:** £1,900, plus fitting costs.

5. **Engine management brain:** The demands of emissions regulations and the introduction of catalysis have made Electronic Control Units (ECUs) far more complex — and costly. As ECUs tend to be sealed units, repair is usually impossible.

6. **BMW 5-series ECU:** up to £700, plus fitting.

7. **Automatic gearboxes:** Many have proved to be unreliable as the miles rack up, and complex electronic management doesn't help. Some, such as the ZF units used by Saab in the 9000, can only be repaired with expensive factory-supplied spares.

8. **Replacement Saab 9000 auto gearbox:** £1,800-plus.

9. **Electronically-controlled heaters:** Many up-market cars are fitted with push-button heater systems, the various air-directing flaps being moved by stepper motors. If a stepper motor fails, the system jams. The only solution is to remove the dashboard and replace the motor.

10. **Alfa Romeo 164 heater stepper motor:** £100, plus up to eight hours labour for fitting.

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